

# Hartford Courant

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## Lamont seeks to maintain tax credit

**Governor to propose keeping earned income credit at historic level**  
**By Christopher Keating**  
Hartford Courant

HARTFORD — Gov. Ned Lamont will propose spending \$75 million to keep the earned income tax credit at the highest level in state history. Lamont said Friday that he has

been meeting with his budget team to craft the proposal that will be unveiled to the state legislature on Feb. 9 as part of the fiscal adjustments in the second year of the two-year budget. “We’re going to try and do what we did last year this year and raise the rate,” Lamont said on a Zoom call. Using federal money unspent from the state’s allocation, Lamont retroactively changed the credit for the 2021 calendar year for

more than 200,000 low-income households. The average family in the program will receive an additional \$375 to bring their state total to as much as \$1,000 for the year, depending on their income, officials said. Lamont increased the state credit to 41.5% of the federal credit, which is the highest in Connecticut history by far. It jumped up from 30.5% — and would have reverted when the federal stimulus money runs out. But Lamont has

made the credit among his budget priorities for the upcoming session that ends on May 4. Lamont touted the credit Friday on a Zoom call with U.S. Rep. John B. Larson, an East Hartford Democrat who has pushed for the credit in Washington, D.C. Changes at the federal level have made it easier to receive the credit. “If you’re single and under 65 and making less than \$12,500, you’re eligible for the earned income tax credit,” Larson said.

“If you’re single and over 65, you’re eligible for the earned income tax credit. ... In order to get this money, though, people have to file [a tax return]. That’s why the IRS has been pushing the awareness and why it’s vitally important.” To be eligible, married couples with no children can earn up to \$27,380 per year. Couples with two children can earn as much as \$53,865 and those with three

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Some of the 32 snowplows in the town of Middletown’s fleet are filled with sand Friday ahead of blizzard conditions forecast for Saturday morning. **MARK MIRKO/HARTFORD COURANT**

## Massive snowstorm bears down on region

Totals could top 2 feet, with blizzard conditions, in parts of Connecticut

**By Christine Dempsey** | Hartford Courant

A winter storm will drop a foot or two of snow in most of Connecticut on Saturday and deliver strong gusts of wind that are likely to send tree limbs onto wires, triggering power outages. A blizzard warning has been issued for New London County. “Blizzard conditions are possible in eastern parts of the state,” Gary Lessor, chief meteorologist at Western Connecticut State University’s weather center, said Friday. The storm will be the biggest since 2017, when 19 inches of snow fell in East Hartford, Lessor said. It has the potential to be the biggest storm since the Feb. 8-9 blizzard in 2013, which dumped more than 2 feet of snow around the state and more than 3 feet — 40 inches — in Hamden.

The National Weather Service issued winter

storm warnings statewide for Saturday, saying snow may fall at a rate of 1-2 inches an hour. The weather service warns people not to drive during blizzards, when whiteouts can occur from blowing snow. “Travel could be very difficult to impossible,” said meteorologist Frank Nocera, adding that strong wind gusts may also take down tree branches.

### How much will we get?

Lessor said Hartford, New Haven and Middlesex counties will likely see 1-2 feet of snow. He expects more in eastern Connecticut, which he said will get 20 inches or more. “It’s possible some places get close to 30 inches,” Lessor said.

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### 1-2 feet

Gary Lessor, chief meteorologist at Western Connecticut State University’s weather center, said that Hartford, New Haven and Middlesex counties could see up to 2 feet of snow. He expects more than 20 inches will fall in eastern Connecticut, with some places potentially seeing close to 30 inches. Litchfield and Fairfield counties should get 7-14 inches. Snow is expected to fall into Saturday evening and could reach a rate of 1-2 inches an hour at times for parts of Connecticut.

## Judge disbars divorce lawyer

Says she disrupted case with ‘empty and malicious claims’

**By Edmund H. Mahony**  
Hartford Courant

A Superior Court judge has taken the unusual step of disbaring a divorce lawyer for making “empty and malicious” claims of abuse and antisemitic declarations to win an advantage for her client by “snarling the case into an un-triable mess.” In his decision, Judge Thomas Moukawsher blasted attorney Nickola Cunha for what he said are malicious accusations that are unsupported by any evidence. In his long decision laying the groundwork for disbarment — and in an earlier decision in the same case — Moukawsher expressed concern that similar, if less egregious, tactics in the increasingly brutal arena of divorce court have the potential “to disrupt and damage the integrity of the judicial system itself.” “She has systematically tried to use the justice system against itself in a bid to frustrate it. In a bid to discredit it. In a bid that, if unchecked here and elsewhere, threatens to destroy it as a credible instrument of democracy,” Moukawsher wrote. “Indeed, Ms. Cunha and her client have lashed the system as broken and corrupt. But the case’s tortured history may be better explained by the system indulging Ms. Cunha and her client too much. In a quest to achieve fairness and give the benefit of every doubt, the system has allowed itself to be tied in knots.” Attempts to reach Cunha were unsuccessful. The alleged behavior questioned in Cunha’s disbarment is not isolated. As contested divorces with prolonged custody battles at ruinous legal costs drag on longer and become more bitter, allegations of conspiracies and anonymous screeds about the state’s family court system are appearing more regularly on the internet.

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## US paints grim picture on Ukraine

Pentagon says Putin has enough troops at border for invasion

**By Helene Cooper and Eric Schmitt**  
The New York Times

WASHINGTON — President Vladimir Putin of Russia has deployed the troops and military hardware needed to invade all of Ukraine, the Pentagon’s top leaders said Friday, as senior Defense Department officials warned that

the tense standoff was leading the United States, its NATO allies and Russia into uncharted territory. Russia has assembled more than 100,000 troops at Ukraine’s borders, the officials said, publicly confirming for the first time what intelligence analysts have described for weeks. Those troops, Pentagon officials said, have the ability to move throughout Ukraine, far beyond an incursion into only the border regions. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin described a bristling array of the Russian combined arms forma-

tions, artillery and rockets assembled at the Ukrainian border, which he said “far and away exceeds what we would typically see them do for exercises.” Gen. Mark Milley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, was more blunt: “I think you’d have to go back quite a while to the Cold War days to see something of this magnitude.” Nevertheless, the leader of Ukraine cautioned Friday against talk of war, even as a diplomatic

**Turn to Ukraine, Page 3**



Ukrainian soldiers train Thursday in the Volnovakha district in the eastern part of the country. The U.S. warns that Russia has assembled more than 100,000 troops at Ukraine’s borders. **BRENDAN HOFFMAN/THE NEW YORK TIMES**

### Murphy eyes a ‘bolder’ mental health reform bill

With an eye toward developing the “next generation” of federal mental health reform legislation, Sen. Chris Murphy met with the leadership of Connecticut Children’s Medical Center on Friday to discuss the crisis in children’s psychiatric care. **Connecticut, Page 1**

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FROM PAGE ONE

Lawyer

from Page 1

Judges have been threatened, and photos of their spouses posted online. A Cromwell man was convicted of threatening one judge and urging followers in antisemitic internet postings to kill others.

Of Connecticut’s 38,500 lawyers, 133 are currently disbarred, according to the Judicial Branch. Disbarred lawyers are able, under state law, to apply for reinstatement after five years, which Moukawsher suggests is too soon in Cunha’s case.

The state judicial branch said it could not immediately provide statistics on how common it is for judges to disbar lawyers who appear before them, a process affirmed by a 2003 state Supreme Court decision.

The Connecticut Practice Book, which establishes rules for the operation of the courts and the conduct of lawyers, gives judges the power to disbar summarily for cause that “occurs in the actual presence of the court.” The Statewide Grievance Committee is empowered to discipline lawyers, but instructed to “defer to the court if the court chooses to exercise its jurisdiction.”

“Ms. Cunha will have the right to apply for reinstatement within five years of this order, not by virtue of the court’s ruling, but because the practice book gives her that right,” Moukawsher wrote.

Until Moukawsher’s ruling Tuesday, Cunha, who has offices in Hamden and has practiced law since 1999, represented one party in a contentious divorce involving a couple with children that has entered its third year, generated enormous fees for lawyers and various family relation’s trial professionals and captured a following of court regulars.

The case was referred to Moukawsher, who is assigned to preside over especially complex and contentious divorces, after Cunha accused the judge presiding over the divorce trial, Gerard I. Adelman, of bias against non-Jews, bias against the disabled and other claims. When Cunha moved to disqualify Adelman, Moukawsher convened a hearing and told her to produce

her proof.

According to Moukawsher’s decision, which reproduces portions of the transcript of the hearing, Cunha rambled for 30 pages or so. Cunha made claims against Adelman but had not produced anything that, in Moukawsher’s view, supported her assertions. Finally, Cunha expressed antisemitic and conspiracy claims, the decision says..

Cunha said she was relying on “the enormous amount of information and evidence that’s come to me” about the alleged conspiracy. Pressed by Moukawsher, she said, “when you start looking at the cases and you start looking at the professionals engaged in the cases, it is consistent and it supports that claim.” She said, “I have a list of cases ... So it’s a vicious circle.”

Moukawsher asked her to produce the list that would support her claim. Cunha rummaged through her computer put failed to produce one. A recess was called to allow her to search further. Finally, Cunha acknowledged she had no list.

“There — there is not, Judge,” Cunha said.

Cunha’s other allegations were dismissed after similar questioning.

Moukawsher summoned Cunha back to court earlier this month to defend herself. He told her she faced disbarment and advised her to hire a lawyer. Cunha declined the advice and instead lashed out at Moukawsher.

She called his conclusions “clearly erroneous.”

“I find these proceedings to be intentionally harassing and intimidation and an attempt by Your Honor solely to shut me down for the corruption that I have raised before his Court,” she said, according to the record. “Your Honor has engaged in malfeasance, gross malfeasance, I will not be intimidated. I will remind this court that your so-called historical writing Memorandum of Decision where you touch upon the history that it is, it is a joke and it is pathetic, and you should be ashamed or yourself for subjecting myself to that type of rhetoric. Frankly Judge, I am ashamed to even be sitting before you with the type of conduct that you have engaged in. You have engaged in material

misrepresentation; you have lied to the public.”

Cunha continued for a moment or two before Moukawsher asked her to stop speaking.

“Yes Judge,” Cunha replied.” Yes. I will obey, Your Honor, would you like me to bow, I’m sorry, I am below you. I will obey. I will be quiet, no problem. Thank you.”

In his written decision, Moukawsher said it is “monstrous” to make Cunha’s conspiracy claim “without thought, without evidence, without restraint, repeatedly, on the record, in court, with a specific claim about a list that proves not to exist.”

He said such behavior threatens the judiciary by undermining its credibility.

“When lawyers speak the public rightly assumes they don’t speak lightly,” Moukawsher said. “After all truth is their business. Therefore, Ms. Cunha’s lies about a Jewish conspiracy are particularly reprehensible. Without the court exposing them as lies, the public might give them some credit when they deserve none.

“Misconduct like this threatens to drag the courts into the primordial ooze that passes for public discourse in some quarters today,” Moukawsher said. “One whiff of this swamp should be enough for the courts and those of its officers who are true to their duties to set out firmly in the other direction. This moment is one chance to do so.”

Moukawsher wrote in his decision disbarring Cunha that her conduct and accusations violated “at least” seven rules of professional conduct and “provide multiple grounds” for disbarment. The rules prohibit dishonesty and deceit; stalling, diverting and disrupting proceedings; and recklessly impugning a judge’s integrity.

He said Cunha used the judicial system to punish opponents and has called three judges assigned so far to her client’s divorce “corrupt and abusive.”

“Her actions have been grave,” Moukawsher wrote. “They have been intentional. Her motives have been corrupt — they have been to cloud the truth for the perceived benefit of her client, rather than to seek out the truth and seek the justice associated with that truth.”



The federal stimulus package gave struggling families a break in the rules for obtaining the earned income tax credit even if they lost a job or work hours during the pandemic in 2020. Here, Catherine Campbell, an engineer at the Ford Motor Co., volunteered in 2020 to help tax filers claim the federal credit. Gov. Ned Lamont wants to allocate \$75 million to keep the credit at 41.5% at the state level. MANDI WRIGHT/TNS

Credit

from Page 1

or more qualifying children can earn as much as \$57,000 per year. Recent changes have included the maximum credit amount and the maximum income amount for childless filers. Childless seniors and young adults under 25 are also eligible. For 2021, filers can have as much as \$10,000 in annual interest and dividend income from their investments, up from the previous total of \$3,650.

“Nobody is getting wealthy with this money,” Larson said. “I don’t know how people are able to survive on that kind of money, but they do.”

The money is needed for daily expenses, advocates said, citing U.S. Census statistics that 33% of renters with children in Connecticut are not caught up on their rent.

In Connecticut, the credit amount has changed multiple times over the past 10 years, depending on the state’s budget fortunes and decisions by the legislature. The credit has gone from 23% to 30.5% and now to 41.5%.

House Republican leader Vincent Candelora and others have been concerned for weeks that Lamont had unilaterally boosted the credit without a vote by the legislature and without any input by Republicans.

“Instead of paying down the mountain of federal unemployment debt Connecticut businesses will have to pay back, the

governor is using \$75 million in federal aid to send checks to people who will already benefit from an Earned Income Tax Credit expansion included in the last budget,” Candelora said recently. “Given the growing excesses of Gov. Lamont’s promotional tour, it’s clear that his decisions are influenced more by a looming re-election campaign than a sense of duty to do what’s best for the state as a whole.”

For years, Connecticut had no state credit because it was blocked in the state legislature and had been opposed by Republican governors John G. Rowland and M. Jodi Rell. The measure was finally approved for the first time under then-Gov. Dannel P. Malloy in 2011.

Other states, advocates said, also have generous programs, including 40% in New Jersey. By 2023, the rate in South Carolina is expected to jump sharply to 125%, officials said.

Both Lamont and Republicans have been advocating for tax cuts this year at a time when the state budget surplus has surged to a projected \$1.2 billion in the current fiscal year and \$1.1 billion next year. A record-breaking streak on Wall Street — before severe volatility during the past week — has poured hundreds of millions of dollars into state coffers in capital gains taxes that are traditionally paid quarterly by wealthy investors through the state income tax.

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**LOTTERY**  
Friday, Jan. 28

PLAY3 DAY	PLAY4 DAY
8 9 2 WB: 3	5 1 0 8 WB: 2

The late lotto numbers were not drawn in time for this edition. For results, please visit [courant.com/lottery](http://courant.com/lottery).

**THURSDAY’S LATE NUMBERS**

<b>PLAY3 NIGHT</b>
6 9 9 WB: 9
<b>PLAY4 NIGHT</b>
4 8 5 4 WB: 2
<b>CASH 5</b>
3 17 24 27 31
<b>LUCKY FOR LIFE</b>
16 23 27 34 40 LB: 7
Tuesday’s est. Lotto jackpot: \$1.1 million
Tonight’s est. Powerball jackpot: \$104 million



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FROM PAGE ONE

# Farmers in fight for Mexican forest

Drug cartels, illegal loggers, avocado growers are foes

By Mark Stevenson  
Associated Press

CHERAN, Mexico — Regular citizens have taken the fight against illegal logging into their own hands in the mountains of western Mexico, where loggers clear entire hillsides for avocado plantations that drain local water supplies and draw drug cartels hungry for extortion money.

In some places, like the Indigenous township of Cheran in Michoacan state, the fight against illegal logging and planting has been so successful it's as if a line had been drawn across the mountains: avocados and cleared land on one side, pine forest on the other. But it has required a decade-long political revolt in which Cheran's townspeople declared themselves autonomous and formed their own government.

Other towns, bullied by growers and drug cartel gunmen, struggle on but are often cowed by violence.

David Ramos Guerrero, a member of the self-governing farmers board, says farmers here have agreed on a total ban on commercial avocado orchards, which he contends only bring "violence, bloodshed."

"People are allowed to



Farmers board member David Ramos Guerrero gives instructions before the start of a community patrol through the forest looking for illegal logging and avocado planting on Jan. 20 in Cheran in Mexico's Michoacan state. **FERNANDO LLANO/AP**

have three, four or five, or at most 10 avocado plants to supply food, but commercial planting isn't allowed," he said.

The reason is clear. On a patrol, Ramos Guerrero looks at an almost deforested valley in a neighboring township. Rows of young avocado trees stand in lines up the denuded slopes that once held pine and fir trees.

"This is an island, all around Cheran there has been an invasion of avocados," he notes.

Anyone who has walked through the cool mountain forest of pine and fir trees in Michoacan knows that the pine canopy protects against heat and evaporation; the thick mat of fallen pine needles acts like a sponge, soaking up and storing humidity; the roots of the pines prevent water and soil

from running off the slopes.

But the first thing avocado growers do is dig retaining ponds to water their orchards, draining streams that once were used by people further down the mountain. And then drug cartels extort money from the avocado growers.

"We have realized the only thing avocados do is soak up all the water that our forests produce," Ramos Guerrero said.

Cheran, which began its experiment in self-rule in 2011 by blocking roads used by illegal loggers, now digs trenches across logging roads with backhoes. As far as avocados, Ramos Guerrero says: "We start in a friendly way, by talking (to farmers). If we don't reach an agreement, then we use force, we tear up or cut down the avocado trees."

If farmers still don't agree to stop logging or planting avocados, that's when Cheran's forestry patrols swing into action.

Riding a pair of pickups through the woods, a community patrol of men armed with AR-15 rifles stop and seize an ax, and then a chainsaw from two men cutting up trees. The men will probably get them back with a caution to seek permission next time. The patrols find already cut pine logs hidden in the brush along the road and seize them, heaving them onto one of the trucks.

Salvador Avila Magana, 65, remembers how it was before the Cheran uprising in 2011. He was scared of this land by threats from loggers, who then clear-cut his land.

"The last threat was that if we showed up there (at his land) again, they were going to kidnap us, we were going to be found in bags," Avila Magana said. "Several people were killed and they were found in pieces, burned."

But even though his 45-acre plot had been completely logged, Avila Magana decided to plant back pine trees, hoping "to leave something for my children or grandchildren," who he hopes can resume what had once been a sustainable forestry practice of extracting pine resin for turpentine or cosmetics.

"We reached an agreement among the communal farmers that we weren't

going to plant avocados, we were going to only plant trees that produce good oxygen," he said.

Avocados have been a miracle crop for thousands of small farmers in Michoacan. With a few acres of well-tended trees, small landholders can send their kids to college or buy a pickup truck, something no other crop allows them to do.

But because of the immense amount of water they need, the expansion of avocados has come by moving into humid pine forests.

Neither the growers nor exporters have made any serious effort to ensure their avocados come from sustainable orchards. The Mexican Avocado Growers Association did not respond to requests for an interview.

About 60 miles away in the town of Villa Madero, activist Guillermo Saucedo tried to institute the kind of farmers' patrols used in Cheran. He got as many as 60 or 70 people to participate in the patrols, starting last May.

But by Dec. 6, Saucedo says he had perhaps spoken too forcefully at meetings or angered the powerful allies of the loggers and avocado growers: he ran up against drug cartel gunmen.

"A white SUV with tinted windows cut me off," Saucedo recalled a month later. "Three people got out with pistols and rifles and they cocked their guns

and pointed them at me ... they started hitting me and forced me into the vehicle."

During the ride, they covered his head and kept hitting him in the head with the rifle stocks and the butts of pistols. Later at a safe house, they repeatedly asked him about a detained cartel boss, but Saucedo thinks that was a cover for their real interest — his community organizing.

Hours later, they abandoned him on a dirt path in a distant township, and instructed him to blame a rival cartel for his abduction.

The patrols ceased and Saucedo has been forced to lay low in his home village of Zangarero. His requests to the federal government for protection have so far gone unheeded, in a country where, over the last three years, 96 community, environmental or rights activists have been murdered.

Saucedo and environmentalist Julio Santoyo are unsure what the exact links between the drug cartel and the loggers and avocado growers in Villa Madero are.

Santoyo believes the gangs could be directly investing in avocado plantations. It would not be beyond belief in Michoacan, where in 2010 another cartel, The Knights Templar, took over the business of mining iron ore and exporting it to China.

Saucedo thinks the cartels are protecting the loggers and growers. "They are acting as Godfathers for them," he said.

## Snow

from Page 1

Litchfield and Fairfield counties should get 7-14 inches, he said.

### When will it end?

Snow will likely fall until Saturday evening. The winter storm warning for the Hartford area and the rest of inland Connecticut is in effect through midnight Saturday; for the coast it is in effect until 7 p.m. Saturday.

"I think it's going to end before midnight," Lessor said.

### What hazards will it bring?

In addition to strong wind gusts plus poor visibility and slippery roads from heavily falling snow, the storm may bring minor coastal flooding.

The U.S. Coast Guard warned of high seas during the storm and advised boaters to double up on mooring lines for boats that have not been removed from the water for winter.

"Significant weather can degrade and delay the Coast Guard's response time, so it is important for the public to take every precaution necessary to preserve their own safety," Coast Guard officials said in a news release.

### How cold will it be?

The temperature will be cold, ranging from the teens to low 20s inland, and to the mid-20s along the shoreline, Lessor said.

### Is Eversource ready?

Eversource, the biggest electricity provider in the state, has been preparing for



Snow plows in the town of Middletown are filled with sand Friday. Saturday's storm could be the biggest in the state since 2017. **MARK MIRKO/HARTFORD COURANT**

the storm for days, spokesman Mitch Gross said. Crews are arriving from as far as Michigan and Florida, with more on the way.

"Some would say we're putting together a small army for this storm," he said Friday morning.

The power company, which serves 149 communities in the state, is positioning its workers throughout its coverage area to allow for a fast response, Gross said, although he warned that a lot of snow and wind could hamper them.

The fact that the snow is expected to be light and fluffy, and not heavy and water-laden, may work in their favor because light snow doesn't weigh down tree branches as much,, he said.

But "the winds could be a major issue," Gross said.

Gross asked residents to prepare for a possible outage by powering up their electronics and making sure their have enough medicine and food, including pet and baby food.

Hartford HealthCare officials said Friday that they, too, are getting ready for the storm. They are coordinating snow plows, stocking supplies at hospitals, prepping generators and setting up cots for workers, some of whom may come hours early or stay hours late to avoid snowy conditions.

"People will be hunkered down on the campuses on Saturday and preparing for what comes then," Patrick Turek, director of emergency management said.

### What else can I do?

Try to stay off the roads. With the storm hitting on a Saturday, many will be able to do so. But those who must drive should take steps to be safe, said AAA spokeswoman Tracy Noble. They should:

- Have an emergency kit in their car. It should include a cellphone, charger and power bank; a first-aid kit; an ice scraper; warning devices like flares; jumper cables and window washer solvent. It also should have a snow shovel, abrasive material like kitty litter to put under tires; a flashlight; blankets and drinking water and snacks.
- Avoid speeding, unnecessary lane changes and powering up hills;

■ Not use cruise control on slippery roads so they always are in full control. Cruise control can misinterpret slipping and sliding as the vehicle slowing down and attempt to accelerate to maintain speed.

■ Control any skids. Slamming on the brakes can make the skid even worse. In the event of a skid, drivers should take their feet off the brake or gas pedal and continue to look and steer where they want to go. Then, they should begin to accelerate slowly.

"Even small amounts of snow and ice can cause big problems on the roadway," said Noble. "If you must go out, buckle up, reduce your speed and avoid distractions. Make sure to clear all of the

snow off the vehicle before pulling out."

Gov. Ned Lamont tweeted Friday that he would implement a travel ban on all tractor trailers statewide beginning at 6 a.m. Saturday until further notice. "We're coordinating this with our neighboring states, including Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Stay safe!," he said.

In an emergency, drivers should:

- Stay with their vehicle, which would provide temporary shelter and make it easier for rescuers to find them.
- Not overexert themselves by trying to dig or push their cars out of the snow. Sand, kitty litter or traction mats would help its tires gain traction on ice and snow. Even the floor mats can help in a jam.
- Tie a brightly colored cloth to the antenna or place a cloth at the top of a rolled-up window to signal distress.
- Make sure the exhaust pipe is not clogged with snow, ice or mud. A blocked exhaust pipe could cause deadly carbon monoxide gas to leak into the vehicle when the engine is running.
- Run the engine and heater just long enough to remove the chill to conserve gasoline.

After the snow has fallen, firefighters ask that residents clear fire hydrants in front of their homes.

Warmer weather is on the horizon, though. Wednesday may be in the 40s, and the thermometer will get near 50 on Thursday and Friday.

*Courant staff writer Alex Puttermann contributed to this report.*

*Christine Dempsey may be reached at [cdempsey@courant.com](mailto:cdempsey@courant.com).*

## Ukraine

from Page 1

scramble to ease the standoff continued with no signs of a breakthrough.

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said that the security situation surrounding his country was not much different from at this time last year, and, while dangerous, did not necessarily mean that war was imminent or unavoidable.

Zelenskyy, a day after speaking with President Joe Biden, emphasized at a news conference that he and Biden did not disagree on the seriousness of the Russian threat but differed on the tone of their public comments on it. Biden also reaffirmed the United

States' commitment to respond forcefully to a Russian attack.

Zelenskyy noted that in the past, Russia has used military buildups as a scare tactic.

"We don't have any misunderstanding with the president, but I just deeply understand what is going on in my country, just as he understands what is going on in his country," Zelenskyy said of Biden.

The drumbeats of war, Zelenskyy added, could contribute to domestic instability and economic troubles that would heighten the risk posed by Russia.

Zelenskyy took issue with decisions by the United States and Britain to withdraw nonessential diplomatic staff from Ukraine,

which he suggested set an unduly alarming tone.

"I think it was a mistake," he said, adding that "under these circumstances, everyone is essential."

"I don't think we have the Titanic here," he said.

During the news conference at the Pentagon, Austin and Milley presented a grim picture of the situation, and Defense Department officials have privately warned that a Russian invasion has the potential to start a conflict between Moscow and the West that could quickly escalate.

U.S. officials estimate that 35,000 Americans are in Ukraine, including 7,000 people who have registered with the U.S. Embassy in Kyiv, the capital.

While the State Depart-

ment has advised Americans to leave the country and begun emptying out the embassy, Pentagon officials know well from their experience in Afghanistan over the summer that U.S. citizens often do not heed advice.

Austin did not rule out the possibility that U.S. troops might be sent to Ukraine to evacuate Americans if Russia invades and there is combat in the streets of Kyiv.

But that is the type of situation that officials fear could lead to the escalation that Pentagon leaders want to avoid.

Austin has put 8,500 U.S. troops on high alert for possible deployment to Eastern Europe, where most of them would join a

NATO rapid response team of 30,000 to 40,000 troops.

While President Biden has made clear that he has no intention of deploying U.S. troops to Ukraine to help fend off an invasion, he indicated this week that he might separately send additional troops to Eastern European allies that are worried about Russian advances.

Ukraine is not a member of NATO, so the United States has no treaty obligation to defend it. But the alliance's so-called eastern flank — former Soviet satellites and the Baltic countries — are concerned that they could be next on Putin's list.

Although American officials do not believe that Putin has decided to launch an invasion, Biden still

believes there is "a distinct possibility" that Russia could do so in February, Emily Horne, spokeswoman for the National Security Council, said Thursday.

French President Emmanuel Macron spoke by videoconference Friday with Putin, and despite Macron's advocacy of a somewhat conciliatory approach toward Moscow, the Kremlin said in a statement afterward that "the principal concerns of Russia went unaddressed."

Still, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov signaled that there could be a window for negotiation with the United States on limited security issues in Europe, including missile deployments and military exercises.



# Biden visits collapsed bridge in Pa.

Accident underlines launch to promote infrastructure law

By Colleen Long, Steve Peoples and Alexandra Jaffe  
Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — Arriving just hours after a Pennsylvania bridge collapse, President Joe Biden stared into the cratered muddy earth where the aging span fell early Friday, striking evidence supporting the \$1 trillion infrastructure law he already had planned to tout on his trip to Pittsburgh.

Standing before concrete barriers papered with yellow police tape, Biden craned his neck to look out over the gaping expanse left by the crumbled bridge, as the smell of gas from a nearby leak filled the air.

Ruptured gas lines along the bridge produced the leak, and the supply of gas was shut off within a half-hour, city officials said.

“The idea that we’ve been so far behind on infrastructure for so many years, it’s mind boggling,” Biden said.

As for the rest of the nation’s aging bridges, he pledged, “We’re gonna fix them all.”

The bridge collapse — which caused no fatalities but prompted rescuers to form a human chain to retrieve people from a precariously perched bus — offered Biden a striking example of what he has declared is an urgent need for investments in the country’s infrastructure.

Five other vehicles were also on the bridge at the time. The cause was being investigated, and crews searched under the debris



A bridge collapse injured several people Friday morning in Pittsburgh’s Frick Park. There were no fatalities. **GENE J. PUSKAR/AP**

for additional victims.

A large crack showed on the end of the bridge where the segmented bus landed 150 feet down in the ravine, as if hit by an earthquake. A car landed upside down in front of the bus, which was operated by the Pittsburgh area’s transit agency.

The Forbes Avenue bridge over Fern Hollow Creek in Frick Park came down at 6:39 a.m., city officials said.

As Biden toured the scene, an officer told him a person who was running by helped first responders get people out of cars. He called it a miracle.

“It really is, it’s astounding,” Biden said.

By midafternoon, three

adults were being treated, and all were in fair condition, the UPMC hospital system said. A fourth person had received treatment and was released.

The steel span was built in 1970, and a 2019 inspection revealed the deck and superstructure to be in poor condition, according to the U.S. Department of Transportation’s National Bridge Inventory.

The infrastructure law signed by Biden has earmarked about \$1.6 billion for Pennsylvania bridge maintenance, with tens of billions more for public transit, highway maintenance and broadband internet expansion in the state.

Speaking later at a manufacturing research and development center, Biden promised that money from the infrastructure law would help rebuild the collapsed Pittsburgh bridge and “thousands of other bridges across the country,” but he also expressed urgency to get the funding distributed.

“We’ve got to move,” he said. “We don’t need headlines that say someone was killed when the next bridge collapses.”

During his remarks, Biden touted strong job growth, particularly in manufacturing, during his first year in office, and spoke further about how his infrastructure law invests in replacing

lead pipes, repairing bridges and expanding broadband access, which he said would create jobs for Americans “so nobody’s left behind.”

The trip marked a return to the president’s roots in more ways than one: Biden grew up in Scranton, Pennsylvania, and launched his last presidential campaign in Pittsburgh in 2019. He won that race in part with a direct appeal to working-class voters, and his allies hope a return to that message — and playing up the strength of the economy on his watch — will help him overcome a polling deficit that Democrats worry could drag down their other candidates in the upcoming midterm elec-

tions.

While at the bridge, Biden spoke with Pittsburgh Mayor Ed Gainey and first responders, and was joined by Sen. Bob Casey, Rep. Conor Lamb and Pennsylvania Lt. Gov. John Fetterman.

Friday’s trip was an opening stop in a broader campaign to promote White House achievements in key states before the midterms, and it brought Biden to one of the top-targeted states this cycle.

The battle to replace Republican Sen. Pat Toomey, who is not seeking reelection, is expected to be one of the most competitive Senate races this year.

But at least one of the three leading Democrats on Pennsylvania’s statewide ballot this spring who were invited to appear with Biden didn’t attend.

State Attorney General Josh Shapiro, the likely Democratic nominee in the race for governor, was absent because of scheduling conflicts, according to his spokesperson. Fetterman, the lieutenant governor and a leading Senate candidate, originally had no plans to attend because of a scheduling conflict, but did appear with Biden at the bridge and later at his speech.

The White House announced Biden’s trip Monday after the president said last week he would look to get out of Washington more in the second year of his presidency.

Biden said it was important that he “go out and talk to the public” about what his administration has accomplished and about why lawmakers in Congress need to get behind the rest of his domestic agenda.

# World reaches 10B doses of vaccine administered

Despite milestone, disparities remain in who gets shots

By Shashank Bengali  
The New York Times

When Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel rolled up his sleeve in December 2020 to receive a dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech coronavirus vaccine, kicking off one of the world’s first mass rollouts of COVID-19 shots, he declared that it marked “the beginning of the end” of the pandemic.

Thirteen months later, his prediction has proved far from true, but 10 billion vaccine doses have been administered globally, a milestone that reflects the astonishing speed with which governments and drug companies have mobilized, allowing many nations to envision a near future in which their people coexist with the virus but aren’t confined by it.

The milestone, reached Friday, according to the Our World in Data project at the University of Oxford, has not been arrived at equitably, even though 10 billion doses could theoretically have meant at least one shot for all of the world’s 7.9 billion people.

In the wealthiest countries, 77% of people have received at least one dose, whereas in low-income countries the figure is less than 10%. As North America and Europe race to overcome omicron surges by offering boosters, with some nations even contemplating a fourth shot, more than one-third of the world’s people, many of them in Africa and poor pockets of Asia, are still waiting for a first dose.

The U.S. has administered five times as many extra shots — about 85 million — as the total number of doses administered in Nigeria, Africa’s most populous nation.

“Ten billion doses is a triumph of science but a complete failure of global solidarity,” said Madhukar Pai, a professor of epidemiology and biostatistics at McGill University in Montreal.

And not all vaccines are the same. Those made in China have shown to be less effective than the mRNA vaccines from Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna. And while nearly all of the world’s COVID-19 vaccines protect against severe illness, early research suggests that most offer little protection against infection

from omicron.

The consequences of the vaccine gap have been highlighted by omicron, which was first identified in southern Africa. Low vaccination coverage creates conditions for widespread virus circulation and the possibility of new variants emerging.

The disparities remain even as COVAX, the global vaccine sharing initiative that facilitates distribution of donations from rich nations, increases its deliveries. After a slow start because of hoarding by rich nations and large outbreaks that prompted export blockages, COVAX said this month that it had delivered its billionth dose — though that is less than half of its initial target.

Misinformation on social media and mistrust of government and pharmaceutical companies has fed into vaccine hesitancy in many countries. Even where people are willing to be inoculated, delivering doses to far-flung areas with poor health infrastructure has been challenging.

Thomas Hale, an associate professor of public policy at the University of Oxford, said that in sub-Saharan Africa, “We’re seeing pretty good vaccination rates in cities and capitals, where



A health care worker gives a woman a dose of Pfizer-BioNTech’s coronavirus vaccine Friday at a clinic set up in the Aceh Museum in Banda Aceh, Indonesia. **CHAIDEER MAHYUDDIN/GETTY-AFP**

vaccines tend to land, but that supply runs headfirst into the general challenges of building stronger health systems in these countries.”

But experts say another challenge is that rich countries have failed to agree on waiving intellectual property restrictions on vaccines and have not put pressure on drug companies to share their technology so poorer nations can manufacture doses locally.

South Africa, for example, has set up a hub to begin developing mRNA vaccines

where scientists, with the backing of the World Health Organization, are trying to reverse-engineer the Moderna vaccine because the U.S. drugmaker won’t share its technology.

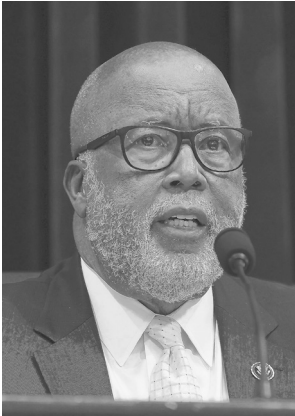
Meanwhile, new research from Israel shows that unvaccinated children whose mothers and fathers were fully vaccinated not only had parents who were far less likely to fall ill with COVID-19, their risk of being infected was lower as well.

That protection was seen against both the alpha and

delta variants of the coronavirus. With delta in particular, the protection was strongest when parents had gotten a booster shot.

The new findings, published Thursday in the journal Science, underscore the importance of “household transmission” in sustaining the pandemic, as well as the indirect role that vaccination can play in protecting a community’s most vulnerable members.

*Los Angeles Times contributed.*



Rep. Bennie Thompson is chairman of the House committee. **CHIP SOMODEVILLA/POOL VIA AP**

# Jan. 6 House committee subpoenas fake Trump electors

By Luke Broadwater and Alan Feuer  
The New York Times

WASHINGTON — The House committee investigating the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the Capitol on Friday issued 14 subpoenas to people who were part of fake slates of electors for President Donald Trump in the 2020 election, digging deeper into his efforts to overturn the results.

The subpoenas target individuals who met and

submitted false Electoral College certificates in seven states won by President Joe Biden: Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, New Mexico, Nevada, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.

“The select committee is seeking information about attempts in multiple states to overturn the results of the 2020 election, including the planning and coordination of efforts to send false slates of electors to the National Archives,” Rep. Bennie Thompson, D-Miss., chair

of the committee, said in a statement. “We believe the individuals we have subpoenaed today have information about how these so-called alternate electors met and who was behind that scheme.”

The so-called alternate electors met Dec. 14, 2020, in seven states that Trump lost and submitted bogus slates of Electoral College votes for him, the committee said. They then sent the false Electoral College certificates to Congress, an

action Trump’s allies and his campaign used to try to justify blocking the certifying the election results during the Jan. 6, 2021, joint session of Congress.

The 14 individuals subpoenaed Friday were: Nancy Cottle and Loraine B. Pellegrino of Arizona; David Shafer and Shawn Still of Georgia; Kathy Berden and Mayra Rodriguez of Michigan; Jewell Powdrell and Deborah W. Maestas of New Mexico; Michael J. McDonald and James

DeGraffenreid of Nevada; Bill Bachenberg and Lisa Patton of Pennsylvania; and Andrew Hitt and Kelly Ruh of Wisconsin.

The subpoenas order the witnesses, all of whom claimed to be either a chair or secretary of the fake elector slates, to turn over documents and sit for depositions in February.

The committee’s subpoenas came as the Justice Department this week said it was investigating the fake electors.



WORLD & NATION

NEWS BRIEFING

Jury selection starts in Ky. trial over fatal Breonna Taylor raid

From news services

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — The only criminal trial to arise from the botched police raid that left Breonna Taylor dead began Friday, as hundreds of potential jurors gathered at a Kentucky courthouse in what activists see as a chance for some measure of justice.

Individual questioning of jurors is scheduled to start next week.

The former Louisville officer facing trial, Brett Hankison, was not charged in Taylor's shooting death but is standing trial on three lower-level felony charges for allegedly firing his service weapon wildly into Taylor's neighbors' apartments during the March 13, 2020, raid.

Whatever the verdict, the trial could leave a bad taste in the mouth of protesters who took to the streets of Louisville for months chanting, "Arrest the cops who killed Breonna Taylor" as part of racial injustice demonstrations that exploded across the country that year.

No officers were charged for the death of the 26-year-old Black woman.

Despite the lack of charges over Taylor's death, her death has led to major changes.

Louisville banned the use of so-called no-knock warrants like the one used in the deadly raid, and the governor signed a law limiting the use of such warrants throughout the state. The Louisville Metro Police Department underwent regime change after the raid, and there is an ongoing, broad federal investigation looking into possible racial biases within the department.

The city also paid \$12 million to settle Taylor's mother's wrongful death lawsuit.

But the two former offi-

cers who fired shots that struck Taylor were not charged.

Myles Cosgrove, who state investigators said likely fired the fatal shot, was fired last January, months after Hankison was forced out. And Jonathan Mattingly, who was wounded in the leg by a bullet fired by Taylor's boyfriend, retired last June.

**Presidential cat:** For the first time in more than a dozen years, a cat is living at the White House.

Her name is Willow, and she's a 2-year-old, green-eyed, gray and white farm cat from Pennsylvania, who first caught the eye of first lady Jill Biden out on the campaign trail.

"Willow is settling into the White House with her favorite toys, treats, and plenty of room to smell and explore," said Michael LaRosa, the first lady's spokesperson.

Jill Biden had said after her husband, Joe Biden, was elected in November 2020 that they would bring a kitty to the White House, but months passed without a sighting or word of when she would arrive. Then last month, the White House said the cat would come in January.

Willow is named after the first lady's hometown of Willow Grove, Pa.

**Defector charged:** A North Korean defector has been indicted on charges of breaking a South Korean law banning the spread of propaganda leaflets along the inter-Korean border, prosecutors and attorneys said Friday in Seoul.

Park Sang Hak is the first person to be indicted under the new law, which critics say puts a policy of engagement with North Korea above human rights.

For years, Park and others like him have launched balloons into North Korea



**A sea of blue:** New York City police officers gather Friday for the funeral of Officer Jason Rivera outside St. Patrick's Cathedral. Rivera, 22, and his partner, Officer Wilbert Mora, 27, were fatally wounded Jan. 21 by a gunman who opened fire on them in a hallway as they responded to a family dispute. The gunman was shot by a third officer and later died. **YUKI IWAMURA/AP**

loaded with propaganda leaflets urging North Koreans to rise up against their authoritarian leader, Kim Jong Un. Under the law, which went into effect last March, sending such leaflets was made a crime punishable by a fine or a prison term of up to three years.

Park defied the ban in April by launching 10 balloons carrying a half million leaflets. The police later raided his office and interrogated him. In July, they formally asked prosecutors to indict Park under the law, which President Moon Jae-in has vowed to strictly enforce.

**British politics:** Doubt about the content and release of a key report into lockdown-breaching parties within the British government deepened Friday, when police said they wanted parts of it to remain unpublished until they finish a criminal investigation.

The Metropolitan Police force said it had asked for

civil servant Sue Gray's report to make only "minimal reference" to the events being investigated by detectives "to avoid any prejudice to our investigation."

The request could further delay the publication of the report which had been expected this week and whose findings could deliver a major blow to Prime Minister Boris Johnson's fragile grip on power.

The senior civil servant is probing allegations that the prime minister and his staff flouted restrictions they imposed on the country in 2020 and 2021 to curb the spread of the coronavirus with "bring your own booze" office parties, birthday celebrations and "wine time Fridays."

The claims have caused public anger, led some Conservative lawmakers to call for Johnson's resignation and triggered intense infighting inside the governing party.

**Prince Andrew:** Britain's Prince Andrew has given up

his honorary membership of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews, one of the world's most prestigious golf clubs, as he fights allegations of sexual abuse that have forced him to retreat from public life.

The club in St. Andrews, Scotland, announced the move Friday, two weeks after Andrew was stripped of his honorary military titles and roles with charitable organizations amid a U.S. civil lawsuit filed by a woman who says she was forced to have sex with Andrew when she was 17.

Andrew, also known as the Duke of York, denies the allegations and has asked for a jury trial in the case filed in federal court in New York.

**Crisis in Ethiopia:** More than a third of the people in Ethiopia's embattled Tigray region "are suffering an extreme lack of food," the United Nations World Food Program said in a new assessment of a region under a monthslong government blockade.

"Families are exhausting all means to feed themselves, with three-quarters of the population using extreme coping strategies to survive," the WFP said in its report released Friday, noting increases in begging and relying on just one meal a day. It called for all parties in Ethiopia's war to agree to a humanitarian cease-fire and "formally agreed transport corridors" for aid after 15 months of war.

The U.N. said no aid convoy has entered the Tigray region of some 6 million people since mid-December. Separately, the U.N. humanitarian agency said less than 10% of the needed supplies, including medicines and fuel, have entered Tigray since mid-July.

Ethiopia's government has been wary of allowing aid to fall into the hands of the Tigray forces who once dominated the national government and have been battling the government of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed since November 2020.



Syrian Democratic Forces fighters walk in a field Wednesday in Hassakeh, northeast Syria. Dozens of Islamic State militants remain holed up in a Syrian prison. **BADERKHAN AHMAD/AP**

Syrian fighters set deadline for IS gunmen to surrender

Associated Press

BEIRUT — U.S.-backed Kurdish-led fighters searched Friday near a Syrian prison for Islamic State group militants and gave an ultimatum to dozens of armed extremists holed up in a small part of the jail to surrender or face an all-out attack, a Kurdish official said.

About a half-dozen IS fighters surrendered Friday morning, among scores of militants hiding in a basement in the northern section of the prison, according to Siamand Ali, a spokesman for the U.S.-backed Syrian Democratic Forces.

He would not confirm or deny a report by the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, an opposition war monitor, that SDF fighters discovered the bodies of 18 of their comrades inside Gweiran prison, also known as al-Sinaa prison, in northeast Syria on Friday.

The Islamic State group's Jan. 20 attack on the prison was the biggest military operation by the extremist group since the fall of their self-declared caliphate in

2019. It came as the militants staged deadly attacks in both Syria and Iraq that stoked fears that IS may be staging a comeback.

The weeklong assault on one of the largest detention facilities in Syria has turned the city of Hassakeh into a conflict zone. The Kurdish-led administration declared a curfew and sealed off the city, barring movement in and out.

Thousands of people in Hassakeh were displaced in recent days because of the fighting.

The SDF claimed Wednesday it had regained full control of the prison — a week after scores of militants overran the facility. The attackers allowed some to escape but also took hostages, including child detainees, and clashed with SDF fighters in violence that killed dozens.

The SDF had said 60 to 90 militants were hiding out in a section of the prison.

Ali said the militants are in the basement of a two-story building and that those who remain inside are refusing to surrender. "Our units are surrounding the building and are trying to convince them to surren-

der," he said.

"We gave them a deadline and we are besieging them," Ali said by telephone from Hassakeh. He refused to say when the ultimatum ends and the attack begins, for security reasons.

The Observatory said SDF fighters are betting that more time will force IS militants to surrender as their food dwindles.

The Hawar News Agency, ANHA, an online Kurdish news service, reported that several automatic rifles, a rocket-propelled grenade and hand grenades were confiscated from the IS gunmen who surrendered Friday.

It added that SDF fighters are conducting search operations in the prison as well as several Hassakeh neighborhoods in search for IS sleeper cells.

The SDF said about 3,000 inmates have surrendered since its operation to retake the prison's northern wing began three days ago.

At least 300 foreign child detainees are believed to be held in the Gweiran facility. Thousands more, mostly under the age of 12, are held with their mothers in locked camps in Syria.

Judge allows deal to destroy rifle in deadly Wis. shooting

By Michael Tarm and Todd Richmond

Associated Press

KENOSHA, Wis. — A judge Friday approved an agreement by lawyers to destroy the rifle that Kyle Rittenhouse used to kill two people and wound a third during a 2020 street protest in Wisconsin.

Assistant District Attorney Thomas Binger said the state crime lab would destroy the rifle, probably in April. Judge Bruce Schroeder, the Kenosha County judge who presided over Rittenhouse's trial, approved the agreement.

Rittenhouse was not in court for Friday's hearing.

The judge also ordered that Rittenhouse's \$2 million bail be divided among his attorney, a foundation that solicited donations for his defense and actor Ricky Schroder, who donated to the defense fund.

Rittenhouse killed Anthony Huber and Joseph Rosenbaum and wounded Gaige Grosskreutz in the arm during the protest in Kenosha in 2020.

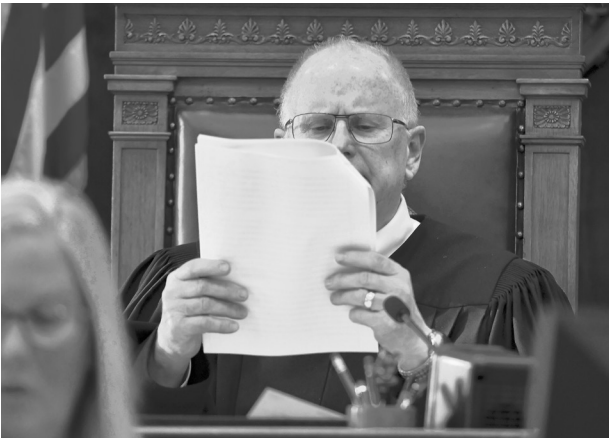
Rittenhouse argued he fired in self-defense after each of the men attacked him.

A jury last year acquitted him of multiple charges, including homicide.

Rittenhouse's attorney, Mark Richards, filed a motion Jan. 19 asking prosecutors to return Rittenhouse's rifle, his ammunition, his face mask and other clothing he was wearing the night of the shooting to him.

Richards and David Hancock, a spokesman for Rittenhouse, said last week that Rittenhouse, who is now 19, wanted to destroy the rifle and throw the rest of the items away so nothing can be used as a political symbol or trophy celebrating the shootings.

"We didn't think anyone should profit from it," Richards told reporters after the



Judge Bruce Schroeder, who presided over the trial, pores over paperwork at a hearing over Kyle Rittenhouse's bond Friday in Kenosha, Wis. **SEAN KRAJACIC/THE KENOSHA NEWS**

hearing.

Asked if anyone had reached out about purchasing the rifle, Richards responded: "Lots of people." He didn't elaborate.

Destruction of the weapon will be recorded as part of the agreement that was approved Friday.

The rest of Rittenhouse's property has already been returned to him, Binger told the judge.

Conservatives across the nation have praised Rittenhouse, saying he was defending Kenosha from far-left militants.

Liberals have painted him as a trigger-happy vigilante.

The judge Friday also ordered county officials to return Rittenhouse's \$2 million bail.

His attorneys raised the money through donations from conservatives across the country.

Richards declined to say after the hearing how much of the bond money would go to Rittenhouse. He didn't immediately respond to a follow-up email message.

Rittenhouse's case dates back to August 2020, when a white Kenosha police officer shot Jacob Blake, a Black man, during a domestic disturbance. The shooting left Blake paralyzed from the waist down and sparked several nights of protests.

The demonstrations

turned chaotic at times, with people burning buildings.

Rittenhouse and his friend, Dominick Black, joined a group of militia members to protect a used car lot on the night of Aug. 25, 2020.

Rittenhouse, who was 17 at time and living in Antioch, Illinois, was armed with an AR-15-style rifle that Black had purchased for him earlier that year because he was too young to buy a firearm under Wisconsin law.

According to the motion, Black had agreed that the rifle would become Rittenhouse's property on his 18th birthday, Jan. 3, 2021.

Bystander and surveillance video shows that just before midnight Rosenbaum chased Rittenhouse down and Rittenhouse shot him as he closed in on him.

He shot Huber after Huber swung a skateboard at his head and Grosskreutz after Grosskreutz ran up to him holding a pistol.

Everyone involved in the shooting was white.

Black pleaded no contest to two citations earlier this month for contributing to the delinquency of a minor in exchange for prosecutors dropping two felony charges of intent to sell a dangerous weapon to a person younger than 18.



# BUSINESS

COURANT.COM/BUSINESS

## Key inflation gauge rises at fastest clip since 1982

Consumer spending drops 0.6% in Dec. amid higher prices, omicron fears

By Christopher Rugaber  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A measure of prices that is closely tracked by the Federal Reserve rose 5.8% last year, the sharpest increase since 1982, as brisk consumer spending collided with snarled supply chains to raise the costs of food, furniture, appliances and other goods.

The report Friday from the Commerce Department also said that consumer spending fell 0.6% in December, with purchases of cars, electronics, and clothes declining. Higher prices might have discouraged some shoppers, along with a wave of omicron cases that kept many Americans from traveling, eating out or visiting entertainment venues.

At the same time, incomes rose 0.3% last month, providing fuel for future spending.

High inflation has hammered household budgets, wiped out last year's wage gains and posed a political challenge to President Joe Biden and Democrats in Congress. It also led the Federal Reserve to signal

Wednesday that it plans to raise interest rates multiple times this year beginning in March to try to get accelerating prices under control.

With consumer spending likely remaining weak, economists project that growth will slow in the first three months of the year to a 1.5% annual rate or even less. That would be down drastically from a strong 6.9% rate in the final three months of 2021.

In another cautionary sign, a measure of consumer sentiment dropped this month to its lowest level in more than a decade, the University of Michigan reported Friday.

Still, economists say steady job gains and increased savings should eventually drive more spending later this year, especially if the omicron wave keeps fading.

"You're going to see the labor market continue to heal, and, the pandemic permitting, the consumer will have enough firepower to grow spending at a reasonable rate as the year goes on," said Joshua Shapiro, chief U.S. economist at MFR Inc.

Most analysts expect inflation to decelerate this year, though it will likely remain

high as rents and wages increase.

Excluding the volatile food and energy categories, so-called core prices rose 4.9% last year, the biggest increase since 1983. That was up from a 4.7% year-over-year rise in core prices in November.

From November to December, prices rose 0.4%, down from a 0.6% increase from October to November. Core prices rose 0.5% for a second straight month.

The economy is expanding at its fastest pace in decades, and job creation reached a five-decade high last year. But the rebound occurred so quickly after the pandemic shutdowns that it left many companies flat-footed, with fewer workers and supplies than they needed. Spending on autos, electronics and other goods jumped 12% in 2021, the government reported Wednesday, the biggest increase since 1946.

Besides raising interest rates, Chair Jerome Powell said Wednesday that the Fed will move to shrink its huge \$8.9 trillion of bond holdings this year, another step that will likely tighten credit, slow spending and potentially weaken the economy.

## US judge scraps plan on oil lease sale in Gulf

By Matthew Daly  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A federal court has rejected a plan to lease millions of acres in the Gulf of Mexico for offshore oil drilling, saying the Biden administration did not adequately take into account the lease sale's effect on planet-warming greenhouse gas emissions, violating a bedrock environmental law.

The decision by U.S. District Judge Rudolph Contreras in Washington on Thursday sends the proposed lease sale back to the Interior Department to decide next steps.

Contreras said it was up to Interior to decide whether to go forward with the sale after a revised review, scrap it or take other steps.

Environmental groups hailed the decision and said the ruling gave President Joe Biden a chance to follow through on a campaign promise to stop offshore leasing in federal waters.

The decision was released on the first anniversary of a federal leasing moratorium Biden ordered as part of his efforts to combat climate change.

A spokeswoman for Interior Secretary Deb Haaland said the agency was reviewing the decision.

Energy companies including Shell, BP, Chevron and ExxonMobil offered a combined \$192 million for drilling rights on federal oil and gas reserves in the Gulf of Mexico in November.

The Interior Department auction came after attorneys general from Republican states led by Louisiana successfully challenged a suspension on sales that Biden imposed when he took office.

Companies bid on 308 tracts totaling nearly 2,700 square miles. It marked the largest acreage and second-highest bid total since Gulf-wide bidding resumed in 2017.



A man walks past a display promoting the Winter Olympics on Thursday in Beijing. The Games get underway on Friday. KEVIN FRAYER/GETTY

## China sports tougher stance

With Xi at the helm, country is much different than when it hosted the Olympics in '08

By Joe McDonald  
Associated Press

BEIJING — China has undergone history-making change since the last time it was an Olympic host in 2008: It is richer, more heavily armed and openly confrontational.

As President Xi Jinping's government prepares for February's Winter Olympics, it has greater leverage to exert influence abroad and resist complaints from the United States and other governments over trade, technology theft and its treatment of Taiwan, Hong Kong and China's Muslim minorities.

The economy is three times larger today. The ruling Communist Party is using that wealth to try to become a "technology power" and is spending more on its military than any country other than the United States.

As fireworks exploded over Beijing in August 2008, China was about to overtake Japan as the No. 2 global economy. The ruling party celebrated with the most expensive Summer Games to date. Foreign

media dubbed it China's "coming out party," echoing the Tokyo Olympics in 1964 that symbolized Japan's recovery from World War II.

The ruling party declared its more assertive stance in 2012, the year Xi took power, in a document that called for "more strategic rights," military status and a bigger global role.

Xi's government sees its system of one-party dictatorship under threat and accuses Washington of trying to deny China its rightful role as a global leader. The ruling party is tightening control over society and business and using internet filters and other censorship to shut out what it deems unhealthy foreign influences. It is doing more to intimidate Taiwan, the island democracy Beijing says belongs to China.

"You can see that China is forced by the United States and its allies such as Australia, Japan and Britain to do so," said Shi Yinhong, a professor of international relations at Renmin University in Beijing.

Xi is also seeking to cement his control over the country. He is expected to use key political meetings late in 2022 to try to break with tradition and stay in power for a third five-year term as head of the ruling party. Earlier, he had the Chinese Constitution changed to get rid of term limits on his

role as president.

Beijing has sent warplanes in growing numbers to fly near Taiwan. It is pouring money into developing nuclear-capable missiles that can hit the United States and aircraft carriers and other weapons to extend its military reach beyond China's shores.

Chinese leaders believe, Shi said, that they need to defend themselves on several fronts: a tariff war launched by then-President Donald Trump in 2018; curbs on access to U.S. technology; and military alliances involving Japan, Australia and other governments to counter Beijing's claims to the South China Sea and other territory.

"If there is a bad relationship between China and another country, it is because the other country harms China," Shi said.

In 2008, Summer Games preparations included a \$43 billion makeover of the Chinese capital. The party built Olympic venues, installed new subway lines and upgrading roads.

As athletes and reporters arrive ahead of Friday's opening of the Winter Games, Chinese leaders face the challenge of shoring up slumping economic growth while they try to contain coronavirus outbreaks and force real estate developers to cut debt that Beijing worries is dangerously high.

### BUSINESS BRIEFING

## Google to invest in India's Airtel

NEW DELHI — Google will invest up to \$1 billion in partnership with India's Airtel to provide affordable access to smartphones to over a billion Indians and speed up use of cloud-based computing for business, the two companies said Friday.

The investment will help India's small businesses adopt digital tools as India works to adopt digital education, payments and e-commerce amid the pandemic, Google said in a blog post.

As part of the "Google for India Digitalization Fund" launched in 2020, Google will pay \$700 million to acquire a 1.28% stake in Airtel, the Indian company said in a statement. Airtel is a global communications provider with over 480 million customers in 17 countries in South Asia and Africa.

## Group: 1.6M jobs lost in Myanmar

BANGKOK — The International Labor Organization said about 1.6 million jobs were lost in Myanmar in 2021, with women suffering the worst setbacks as work in factories, tourism and construction dwindled amid the pandemic and a military takeover.

In a report issued Friday, the ILO said the country was facing a "multi-dimensional humanitarian crisis" as political turmoil, violence, insecurity and displacement have been heaped on top of the troubles from the coronavirus pandemic.

The jobs lost, which include both formal employment and informal work, amounted to about 8% of all employment, as many people stopped working after the military seized power Feb. 1, ousting the country's elected government.

## FAA: Deal reached with telecoms in 5G feud

By Niraj Chokshi  
The New York Times

The Federal Aviation Administration said Friday that it had reached an agreement with Verizon and AT&T on a way to expand 5G cellular service while allowing more aircraft to safely land at airports nationwide, cooling down a dispute between wireless providers and airlines.

At issue were concerns from airlines and the FAA that a planned nationwide 5G expansion would threaten flight safety.

The new generation of 5G service, which provides much faster access to the internet, uses so-called C-band frequencies, which are close to the portion of airwaves used by key safety devices.

A day before the planned expansion last week, AT&T and Verizon agreed to a compromise: They would continue with the rollout but would not activate 5G within 2 miles of some airport runways, in line with a request from the aviation industry.

The FAA's announcement Friday suggested that all sides were progressing toward a more lasting solution.

The FAA said that it "appreciates the strong communication" and collaboration from the wireless companies, which it said had provided more precise data about the location of wireless transmitters and had aided in a deeper analysis of how 5G signals interact with sensitive aircraft instruments.

Verizon and AT&T declined to comment on the FAA's statement.

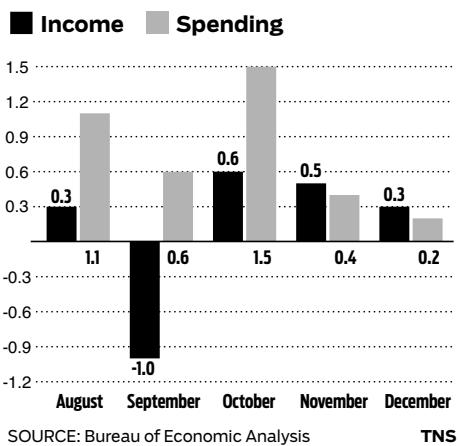
Nick Ludlum, chief communications officer at CTIA, a wireless industry group, said that the agreement was "a positive development that highlights the considerable progress the wireless industry, aviation industry, FAA and FCC are making to ensure robust 5G service and safe flights."

Airlines and the FAA were concerned that 5G could interfere with readings from radio altimeters, devices that determine the distance between planes and the ground.

President Joe Biden had commended AT&T and Verizon last week for agreeing to delay deployment near major airports last week. Since then, the FAA has cleared an estimated 90% of the U.S. fleet of commercial airplanes to safely land where the new generation of 5G is deployed.

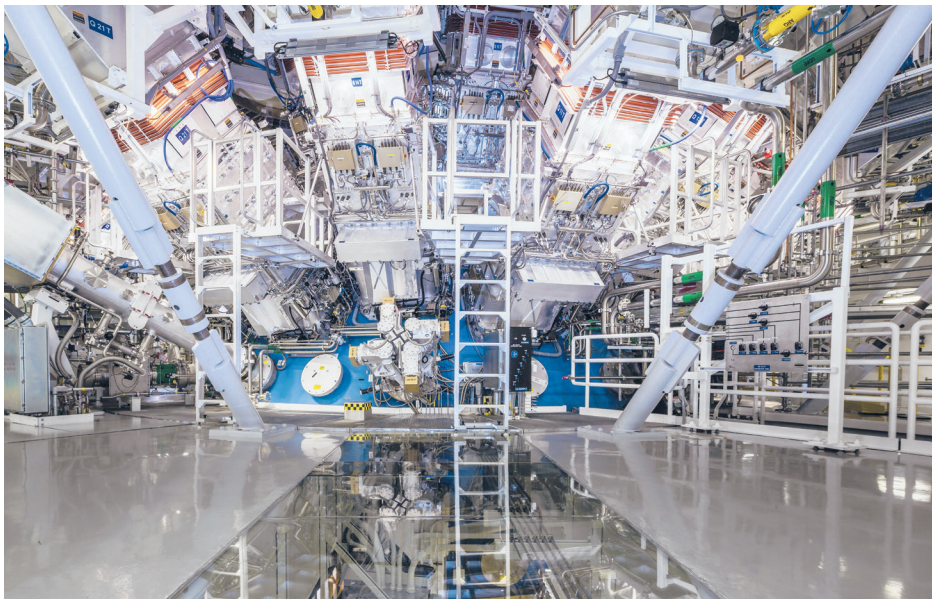
## Personal income and spending

Percent change from preceding month





BUSINESS



Researchers in California say they've taken a step in the pursuit of fusion power. Above, the NIF Target Bay at the lab. DAMIEN JEMISON/LAWRENCE LIVERMORE NATIONAL LABORATORY

Hot stuff: Lab hits milestone on long road to fusion power

By Seth Borenstein  
Associated Press

With 192 lasers and temperatures more than three times hotter than the center of the sun, scientists hit—at least for a fraction of a second—a key milestone on the long road toward nearly pollution-free fusion energy.

Researchers at the National Ignition Facility at the Lawrence Livermore National Lab in California were able to spark a fusion reaction that briefly sustained itself—a major feat because fusion requires such high temperatures and pressures that it easily fizzles out.

The ultimate goal, still years away, is to generate power the way the sun generates heat, by smooching hydrogen atoms so close to each other that they combine into helium, which releases torrents of energy.

A team of over 100 scientists published the results of four experiments that achieved what is known as a burning plasma in Wednesday's journal Nature. With those results, along with preliminary results

announced last August from follow-up experiments, scientists say they are on the threshold of an even bigger advance: ignition. That's when the fuel can continue to "burn" on its own and produce more energy than what's needed to spark the initial reaction.

"We're very close to that next step," said study lead author Alex Zylstra, an experimental physicist at Livermore.

Nuclear fusion presses together two types of hydrogen found in water molecules. When they fuse, "a small amount (milligrams) of fuel produces enormous amounts of energy and it's also very 'clean' in that it produces no radioactive waste," said Carolyn Kuranz, a University of Michigan experimental plasma physicist who wasn't part of the research.

"It's basically limitless, clean energy that can be deployed anywhere," she said.

But don't bank on fusion just yet.

"The result is scientifically very exciting for us," said study co-author Omar Hurricane, chief scientist

for Lawrence Livermore's fusion program. "But we're a long way from useful energy,"

Maybe decades, he said.

It's already taken several years inside a lab and many failed attempts to get to this point. One adjustment that helped: Researchers made the fuel capsule about 10% bigger. Now it's the size of a BB.

That capsule fits in a tiny gold metal can that researchers aim 192 lasers at. They heat it to about 100 million degrees, creating about 50% more pressure inside the capsule than what's inside the center of the sun. These experiments created burning plasmas that lasted a trillionth of a second, but that was enough to be considered a success, Zylstra said.

Overall, the four experiments in the Nature study—conducted in 2020 and 2021—produced as much as 0.17 megajoules of energy, That's far more than previous attempts, but still less than one-tenth of the power used to start the process, Zylstra said. A megajoule is about enough energy to heat a gallon of water 100 degrees.

Gates Foundation set to add 4 to board in wake of divorce

By Haleluya Hadero  
Associated Press

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation has announced it will add four members to its board of trustees, a first for the Seattle-based philanthropic giant whose decision making has been guided by very few hands since its incorporation in 2000.

The foundation, one of the world's largest with its \$50 billion endowment, said it would search for new trustees in July after its two co-chairs and trustees — Bill Gates and Melinda French Gates — announced their divorce.

This week's announcement means the global charitable group will now have six people guide its work. However, Gates and French Gates will continue to have additional authority as co-chairs of the foundation.

Gates Foundation CEO Mark Suzman wrote in his annual letter Wednesday he would be joining the board alongside Zimbabwean telecom billionaire Strive Masiyiwa, the African Union's COVID-19 vaccine envoy; Minouche Shafik, director of the London School of Economics and Political Science; and Thomas Tierney, co-founder and co-chair of The Bridgespan Group, the philanthropic consulting firm that's been an influential force behind MacKenzie Scott's unconventional multibillion dollar donations.

"This obviously is a big milestone for the Gates Foundation," Suzman said, adding the new group will help make the foundation's work "stronger, better and more informed."

Critics have long argued the foundation, whose funding for the World Health Organization nearly matches that of the U.S. government, has outsized influence and needs broader



Bill Gates and Melinda French Gates announced last year that they would divorce. ELAINE THOMPSON/AP 2019

leadership. Suzman has said those calls didn't factor into the decision to expand the board. Instead, he wrote the changes were a response to Warren Buffett's resignation from the foundation board in June, and the death of Gates' father and honorary co-chair, Bill Gates Sr., in 2020.

Suzman said the additions also represent a recognition by Gates and French Gates "especially in the wake of their recent divorce" that "independent voices" will aid the foundation be stable and impactful for its future's work.

The foundation wanted board members it was familiar with, and who have had some personal interaction with Gates and French Gates. Masiyiwa has served as the head of the Gates-backed Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa and worked with the charitable group on other initiatives. He has also launched sharp criticisms at COVAX, the Gates-backed global initiative that fell well short of its own COVID-19 vaccine distribution goals last year.

Gates himself was slammed by some global health experts last year when he defended stringent intellectual property rights as the best way to

speed innovation, a move some saw as prioritizing profits over vaccinations. Following the barrage of criticism, the foundation reversed course, and said they supported temporarily waving patents.

Still, it's hard to find many groups in the public health community that are outspoken critics.

"They are such a powerful player that it's hard for people to speak truth to power to them," said David Callahan, founder of the Insider Philanthropy website and author of "The Givers: Wealth, Power, and Philanthropy in a New Gilded Age." "So many of the people who may be critics of the Gates Foundation are funded by the Gates Foundation, or would like to be funded by the Gates Foundation."

Meanwhile, Priti Krish- tel, the co-founder of the Initiative for Medicines, Access & Knowledge, a nonprofit that advocates for greater global access for drug treatments, said the changes represent a positive step. But Krishtel noted more can be done to bring in people who don't share the foundation's market-driven approach to global health.

The board's final tally could include up to nine total members.

### MARKET RUNDOWN

Saturday, January 29, 2022

▲ DOW  
34,725.47 +564.69

▼ 10-YRT-BOND  
1.77% -0.4

▼ GOLD  
\$1,784.90 -8.20

36,000  
34,560  
33,120

10 DAYS

Dow Jones industrials

Close: 34,725.47  
Change: 564.69 (1.7%)

37,600  
36,800  
36,000  
35,200  
34,400  
33,600

A S O N D J

#### Commodities

	CLOSE	PREV.	YTD
<b>FUELS</b>			
Crude Oil (bbl)	86.82	86.61	+15.44%
Natural Gas (mm btu)	4.64	4.28	+24.37%
Unleaded Gas (gal)	2.54	2.52	+14.09%
<b>METALS</b>			
Gold (oz)	1,784.90	1,793.10	-2.33%
Silver (oz)	22.30	22.68	-4.40%

(Previous and change figures reflect current contract.)

Foreign Exchange		Money Rates			
For	U.S. \$	U.S. \$	PREV. WK.		
Britain	1.3387	.7470	Prime rate	3.25	3.25
Canada	.7821	1.2785	3-mo. T-Bill	0.19	0.17
China	.1572	6.3610	6-mo. T-Bill	0.44	0.35
Euro	1.1145	.8972	5-yr T-Note	1.61	1.54
Japan	.008678	115.23	10-yr T-Note	1.77	1.75
Mexico	.047930	20.8635	30-yr T-Bond	2.08	2.07

Global Markets				
	CLOSE	CHG.	%CHG.	%YTD
Frankfurt	15,318.95	-205.32	-1.32%	-3.56%
London	7,466.07	-88.24	-1.17%	+1.10%
Hong Kong	23,550.08	-256.92	-1.08%	+.65%
Nikkei	26,717.34	+547.04	+2.09%	-7.20%

Stocks of Local Interest									
STOCK (TICKER)	CLOSE	CHG.	YTD %CHG		STOCK (TICKER)	CLOSE	CHG.	YTD %CHG	
AMC Entertainment A (AMC)	15.06	+.54	-44.6		MGM Resorts Intl (MGM)	41.63	+1.01	-7.2	
AT&T Inc (T)	25.21	+1.09	+2.5		MetLife Inc (MET)	66.06	+.75	+5.7	
Adv Micro Dev (AMD)	105.24	+2.64	-26.9		Microsoft Corp (MSFT)	308.26	+8.42	-8.3	
Affirm Holdings Inc (AFRM)	59.71	+8.70	-40.6		NextEra Energy (NEE)	72.50	-.01	-22.3	
American Airlines Gp (AAL)	15.64	-.14	-12.9		Norwegian Cruise Ln (NCLH)	19.56	-.29	-5.7	
Amphenol Corp (APH)	77.11	+2.08	-11.8		Novartis AG (NVS)	85.91	+.77	-1.8	
Annaly Capital Mgmt (NLY)	7.78	+.07	-.5		Nvidia Corporation (NVDA)	228.40	+8.96	-22.3	
Apple Inc (AAPL)	170.33	+11.11	-.1		Otis Worldwide Corp (OTIS)	82.77	+.16	-.4.9	
Avangrid Inc (AGR)	45.93	+.61	-.7.9		Palantir Technol (PLTR)	12.71	+.43	-30.2	
Bank of America (BAC)	45.87	+.40	+3.1		Peoples Utd Fncl (PBCT)	19.66	+.39	+10.3	
Barnes Group (B)	45.08	+.17	-.3.2		Pfizer Inc (PFE)	54.33	+.96	-8.0	
Booking Holdings (BKNG)	2412.94	+53.29	+.6		Pitney Bowes (PBI)	5.86	+.06	-11.6	
Brist Myr Sqb (BMY)	64.91	+1.05	+.4		Plug Power Inc (PLUG)	18.76	+.50	-33.5	
CVS Health Corp (CVS)	109.27	+2.48	+5.9		Prudential Fncl (PRU)	110.19	-.42	+1.8	
Carnival Corp (CCL)	18.97	-.14	-5.7		Pub Svc Ent Gp (PEG)	66.03	+.63	-1.0	
Carrier Global Corp (CARR)	46.45	+.36	-14.4		Raytheon Technolog (RTX)	90.33	+1.05	+5.0	
Charter Communic (CHTR)	590.47	+29.44	-.9.4		Robinhood Markets A (HOOD)	12.73	+1.12	-28.3	
Cigna Corp (CI)	233.45	+6.02	+1.7		Rogers Corp (ROG)	272.97	-.03	...	
Cisco Syst (CSCO)	55.61	+.99	-12.2		Rogers Corp (RBLX)	58.18	+1.12	-43.6	
Comcast Corp A (CMCSA)	49.72	+1.71	-.1.2		SS&C Technologies (SSNC)	77.93	+1.52	-.4.9	
DiDi Global Inc (DIDI)	3.72	-.18	-25.3		Snap Inc A (SNAP)	30.42	+2.12	-35.3	
Disney (DIS)	138.63	+3.21	-10.5		SoFi Technologies (SOFI)	11.10	-.26	-29.8	
DraftKings Inc (DKNG)	20.64	+1.25	-24.9		Stanley Black & Deck (SWK)	171.93	+.26	-8.8	
EMCOR Group Inc (EME)	117.88	+2.08	-.7.5		Starwood Prop Trust (STWD)	24.07	+.05	-.9	
Ethan Allen (ETD)	24.29	+.53	-.7.6		Sundial Growers Inc (SNDL)	.45	+.02	-21.6	
Eversource Energy (ES)	87.21	+1.47	-.4.1		Terex Corp (TEX)	41.16	-.28	-6.3	
Exela Technologies (XELA)	.63	+.08	-28.3		Tesla Inc (TSLA)	846.35	+17.25	-19.9	
Exxon Mobil Corp (XOM)	75.28	+.16	+23.0		Travelers Cos (TRV)	166.82	+1.16	+6.6	
Ford Motor (F)	19.54	+.09	-.5.9		Uber Technologies (UBER)	35.21	+1.12	-16.0	
Freeport McMoRan (FCX)	36.04	-1.06	-13.6		United Rentals (URI)	317.77	-2.03	-.4.4	
FuelCell Energy (FCEL)	3.68	+.12	-29.2		US Steel Corp (X)	19.54	+.95	-17.9	
Gen Dynamics (GD)	212.82	+4.02	+2.1		UnitedHealth Group (UNH)	466.06	+4.46	-.7.2	
Gen Electric (GE)	92.10	+2.20	-.2.5		Verizon Comm (VZ)	52.90	+1.71	+1.8	
General Motors Co (GM)	50.24	-.121	-14.3		Virtus Invest (VRTS)	247.84	+2.44	-16.6	
Grab Holdings Ltd A (GRAB)	5.51	-.20	-22.7		Voya Inc (V)	228.00	+21.85	+5.2	
Hartford Fn Sv (HIG)	71.20	+1.33	+3.1		Voya Financial (VOYA)	67.37	-.15	+1.6	
Honeywell Intl (HON)	201.99	+1.34	-.3.1		Webster Financial (WBS)	58.80	+.34	+5.3	
Horizon Tech Fin (HRZN)	14.46	+.11	-.9.2		Wells Fargo & Co (WFC)	54.19	+.43	+12.9	
Imperial Petroleum (IMPP)	2.18	+1.02	+1.9		White Mtns Insur (WMT)	1024.32	+11.32	+1.0	
Infosys Ltd (INFY)	22.66	+.85	-10.5		World Wrestling Ent (WWE)	48.70	-.13	-1.3	
Intel Corp (INTC)	47.73	-.32	-.7.3		XPO Logistics Inc (XPO)	64.01	+1.28	-17.3	
Kaman (KAMN)	39.84	-.18	-.7.7		Xerox Holdings Corp (XRX)	20.52	+.09	-.9.4	
Keycorp (KEY)	25.13	+.19	+8.6						
Lincoln Natl Corp (LNC)	68.57	+.15	+.5						
Lucid Group Inc (LCID)	27.15	-1.55	-28.6						

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# OPINION

COURANT.COM/OPINION

OP-ED

## Black babies are nearly 40% of abortions

By Gary Franks

Is there something wrong with this picture — nearly 40% of all abortions in America since Roe vs. Wade have been from Black Americans?

This equates to more than 20 million Black pregnancies aborted. That would be the equivalent to either the populations of New York or Florida. Yet, Black



Franks

people make up just 14% of the U.S. White people account for 35% of all abortions as the majority population in the country.

Is it because Black people have suffered more cases of incest, rape, or mothers in need to abort due to the threat of death? I think not.

So why is this happening? Is it a silent genocide within America? After all abortions would amount to a 50% reduction of the Black population. Today, there are 46 million Black Americans.

I supported the so-called pro-choice position while in Congress. These are votes I regret today and pray for God's forgiveness on so many levels.

I am not declaring Planned Parenthood during the early part of the 20th century a racist organization, and definitely not today. But you can judge for yourself based on the content of this column.

Planned Parenthood has appointed about half of its presidents from minority communities. In its early days, it succeeded in enlisting the support of many if not most of the black leaders during that period. Today every member of the Congressional Black Caucus supports Planned Parenthood. So how could it be racist? One could argue.

But digging deeper into the research one discovers that its founder, Margaret Sanger, wrote about the "Negro Project" or "Problem" in terms akin to believers of eugenics.

There are two sides to every coin. One



While Black people make up 14% of the U.S. population, they account for nearly 40% of all abortions, says former U.S. Rep. Gary Franks. **MIKE STOCKER/SOUTH FLORIDA SUN SENTINEL**

side talks about Black infant mortality rates and the death rate of Black mothers during childbirth. Their mantra: health care. Yet the other side has mounting abortions of Black pregnancies.

Former President Richard Nixon was the first to authorize federal funds to Planned Parenthood in 1970 as an extension of the Public Health Service Act Title X. His administration provided funding for family planning and services including contraception, which had bipartisan support in Congress. "No American woman should be denied access to family planning assistance because of her economic condition," Nixon said.

Noble.

I concurred when I was in Congress. The line is drawn on abortions,

however. Some of Planned Parenthood largest contributors refuse to support any of their funds going toward abortions. More should follow. Thanks to the Hyde Amendment, Congress denies nearly half billion dollars a year from doing the same. Yet Planned Parenthood is the leading provider of abortion services. This is unfortunate.

Somehow, the organization has cleverly added cancer screening to its list of services. And what does that have to do with its original mission of family planning? But like baseball and apple pie, how can you oppose it? Smart.

Had I learned of Ms. Sanger's own words when I was an elected official, I would have never allowed myself to be associated with any group she led. Here she is in

her own words: "Birth control itself, often denounced as a violation of natural law, is nothing more or less than the facilitation of the process of weeding out the unfit of preventing the birth of defective or of those who will become defectives."

"In 1932 she wrote about the "Negro problem" in America. In a letter to Dr. Clarence Gamble she wrote, "We don't want the word to go out that we want to exterminate the Negro population." She feared the perception that her efforts could be interpreted as being harmful to a certain part of the Black community. She referenced working through black leaders to accomplish her birth control mission, especially black ministers. She also believed in segregating "defective" people.

I implore the U.S. Supreme Court to do everything in its power to stop the madness. Socioeconomic reasons should not be justification to abort a pregnancy in America. We, as a society, are better than that.

Planned Parenthood leaders are as skillful with their onerous and subtle tactics as the tobacco industry was back in the day. Big Tobacco used the vast majority of its billboard advertisements to target the Black community, knowing full well that its product was harmful to one's health. The proliferation of liquor stores and illegal drugs also seem to find their way disproportionately into the Black community. And what is not found in many Black communities are groceries stores selling fresh fruit and vegetables.

Oh, and where are most of the Planned Parenthood facilities? You guessed it - in the Black community.

There are so many reasons to seriously overhaul this organization.

*Gary Franks served three terms as U.S. representative for Connecticut's 5th District. He was the first Black Republican elected to the House in nearly 60 years and New England's first Black member of the House. Host: podcast "We Speak Frankly." Author: "With God, For God, and For Country." @GaryFranks*

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### If you know about drugs in schools, speak up

It has been 25 years since I retired as office secretary (1971-1997) in a large high school, and the illegal drug problems were rampant then. After losing a beloved son at age 31 who battled addiction for years and lost, I found it very difficult to be aware of our young, curious, and typical students who were experimenting with mind-altering drugs for the first time while the adults remained silent about the drug dealers. I have no doubt they thought by remaining silent, they were protecting the image of our school. At that time even the parents were protecting the problems. I knew that my son was more important than my secrets or an "image" and I also knew that addiction was like playing Russian Roulette. Many kids could experiment and move on, but some could not. I thought then as I do now, that if we see something, say something.

I hope what happened at this school can cause administrators, faculty, and the health departments to realize that mind-altering drugs come in all shapes and sizes and we should not wait until it becomes something of this magnitude to speak up.

**Hope McKay Rice, Enfield**

### Poor placement of health worker story

The editorial decision to run the health care lawsuit headline in Sunday's paper on Page 1 [Jan. 16, "Analyst: Hospital suit pretty 'novel'"], and the plea from health care workers in an inside section [Sunday CT, Page 1, "Health care workers plead for help"], was a poor one. That plea for help should not have been relegated to Section B. The health worker crisis is happening today; the lawsuit is not acute. Textbook and responsible journalism would dictate that informing the public of a plea from health care workers in crisis today takes precedence over the bureaucracy of care. The needs of the community would also.

**Robert W. Painter, West Hartford**

### Fox News is a threat to democracy

As American democracy is increasingly threatened, it is clear that there is a large number of people who do not believe that democracy is a good thing. To them, "democracy" means allowing immigrants to come to America for work, providing those in need with food stamps and housing subsidies, and expanding Medicaid. They believe they are being exploited by the government for the benefit of others, apparently unaware that the super-rich get the biggest benefits.

The ruling Republican class doesn't like the idea of democracy, either, if it means giving the electorate what it wants: investment in infrastructure and clean energy, family benefits, tax credits, affordable health care and voting rights. Misled into voting against their own interests,

ordinary citizens have aligned themselves with the Republican Party to grab the reins of political power. We witnessed this on Jan. 6, 2021, when Trump supporters stormed the Capitol. Fox News, the Republican's media platform, has played a pivotal role in creating this partnership of elites and their foot soldiers. It has cultivated a loyal Trump following by fabricating threats, stirring fear and hatred, and presenting Trump as society's savior. Fox News is the real threat that is dividing this country and questioning the validity of democracy itself.

**Rosemary Noonan, Tolland**

### No sympathy for poor Andy Roberts

I'm all for having my hard-earned tax dollars being used to help the less fortunate despite my wife and I being retired and on a limited and fixed income. That said, I wanted to scream when I read the Associated Press article in the Courant and regarding Andy Roberts, who's whining about losing the gift and \$550 per month he has been receiving as part of the Child Tax Credit [Page 1, Jan. 15, "End of child tax credit hits home"].

Poor Andy had the nerve to say he was using that money not to pay for food or heat, but instead, for Girl Scouts, ballet, acting lessons and sneakers. To that I say to Andy, get a job or second job, or have your grandchildren go without things that are far from necessities. No wonder hard-working people are up in arms with all the money being printed and distributed to people like poor Andy, who is whining about entitlements that he obviously shouldn't have received in the first place.

**Rich Collins, West Hartford**

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OP-ED

## It's time to challenge the right wing's radical agenda for schools

By E.J. Dionne Jr.

The Washington Post

The right wing is invoking the slogan of "parental control" to rationalize imposing a radical agenda on schools. Its ideas reflect not the wishes or interests of the vast majority of parents but a narrow, ideological worldview rooted in culture wars and censorship.

Enough.

Middle-of-the-road parents should unite with progressives in standing up to this dangerous campaign. Their shared purpose is not some flight of leftist fantasy, but to endorse propositions rooted in common sense and good pedagogy.

To wit: We all long for a mask-free world. But in the short term, mask requirements are necessary to achieve what everybody claims to agree on — keeping schools open safely.

A small group of parents should not be allowed to censor controversial books by tossing them out of school libraries. We don't need "snitch lines" that encourage parents to offer complaints aimed at intimidating teachers who dare to talk about race, racism and other topics displeasing to the ideologues.

American history should be taught accurately. Our nation's story should not be distorted to meet the short-term electoral needs of conservative politicians. And while citizens should certainly be free to protest and complain, school board members should not face harassment, threats or actual violence.

It's imperative to assert these basic commitments because some Republican politicians have succeeded, until recently, in hiding their true goals behind reasonable-sounding rhetoric.

In Virginia, Republican Gov. Glenn Youngkin prevailed in November partly by focusing on legitimate parental discontent. This has left Democrats covering about how they were losing the education issue to the GOP.

Yes, many parents remain worried about the impact that school lockdowns have had on learning and children's mental health (in addition to the stresses that scheduling hell introduced into families' lives). If Youngkin's victory shakes previously complacent Democrats into realizing they can't take for granted their long-standing edge on education, great.

Youngkin showed why his message is so alluring in a Post op-ed last week in which he insisted on a point no one disagrees with: "Parents should have a say in education."

The problem is how he translates that sentence into policy — which is precisely why he is facing a vigorous backlash against his executive order barring local school boards from requiring masks. Seven school boards have filed suit to overturn the governor's ukase, arguing that it violates the state

constitution, which vests control of education in school boards. Funny how conservatives love "local control" until they want to impose their own preferences from on high.

Substantively, the school officials argue from overwhelming evidence that masking helps contain the spread of COVID-19 and that making masks optional will render schools less safe.

Youngkin's order banning the teaching of critical race theory is dangerous in a different way. It's not just that CRT is not formally taught in Virginia's K-12 public schools but also that the governor has made clear he's talking about a lot more than a theory.

On Monday, he went on a conservative talk show to tout a government email address where parents could "send to us any, any instances where they feel that their fundamental rights are being violated, where their children are not being respected, where there are inherently divisive practices in the schools."

"Inherently divisive" covers a lot of ground, and it's the sort of concept being used around the country to stop any teaching that right-wingers don't like. Last week, a committee in the Florida Senate advanced a bill that would prohibit making white people feel "discomfort" when taught about past discrimination. It would affect private business trainings as well as schools. Who says conservatives are against big government's regulation of free enterprise?

"An individual should not be made to feel discomfort, guilt, anguish, or any other form of psychological distress on account of his or her race," the bill reads. This from conservatives who regularly call liberals "snowflakes" ready to ban free speech in the name of "feelings."

Meanwhile, as my colleague Dana Milbank pointed out recently, an October memo from Attorney General Merrick Garland taking on "a disturbing spike in harassment, intimidation and threats of violence against school administrators, board members, teachers and staff" has been painted by right-wing media as an attack against free speech by parents.

No, it wasn't. Garland took pains to insist that "spirited debate about policy matters is protected under our Constitution." Perhaps the far right prefers not to draw a distinction between free speech and "intimidation and threats of violence." (See: Jan. 6.) But the rest of us should.

There will always be controversy over what schools should teach, but it's time to draw sharp lines against censorship and a right-wing form of political correctness that privileges feelings over knowledge and ideology over learning.

*E.J. Dionne writes about politics for The Washington Post.*



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## PUBLIC NOTICES

### ORDER OF NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that Extra Space  
Storage will sell at public auction, to satisfy  
the lien of the owner, personal property de-  
scribed below belonging to those individuals  
listed below at location indicated:  
ExtraSpace Storage, 56 Pameacha Ave,  
Middletown, CT 06457 860-575-7610  
February 9, 2022 at 11:00 AM  
David Lanzoni Unit# 2061 Household Items  
Sandra Carr Unit# 2118 Household Items  
Lisa McNeil Unit# 2125 Household  
Mercedes Jones Unit# 3020 Furniture  
Jeffrey Mack Unit# 3078 Household Items  
Johanna Baez Unit# 3124 Household Items  
The auction will be listed and advertised on  
www.storageauction.com. Purchases  
must be made with cash only and paid at the  
above referenced facility in order to complete  
the transaction. Extra Space Storage may  
refuse any bid and may rescind any purchase  
up until the winning bidder takes possession  
of the personal property.  
1/29, 2/4/2022 7138719

### Town of Avon PUBLIC HEARING

In accordance with the provisions of Section  
7-255 of the Connecticut General Statutes,  
notice is hereby given that the Avon Water  
Pollution Control Authority will hold a Public  
Hearing on Thursday, February 10, 2022  
at 7:00 PM, virtually via GoToMeeting, to  
consider and permit all interested persons to  
speak on the plan of the Authority's proposed  
change to the Sewer Use rates.

The proposed rate change must provide  
revenue for increasing sewage collection and  
treatment costs as well as provide limited  
funding for capital improvements.

Dated at Avon, Connecticut this 28th day  
of January, 2022.

Avon Water Pollution Control Authority  
1/29/2022 7139385

### VERNON HOUSING AUTHORITY Request for Qualifications from Architects/Engineers to Assist the Housing Authority in Preparation of Plans, Specifications & Contract Documents for Major Renovations at Grove Court

The Vernon Housing Authority extends an invitation to architects/engineers to submit a statement  
of their qualifications to the Authority. The architects/engineer's qualifications should  
indicate the ability to perform work required in a timely and sufficient manner. The architect/  
engineer must be licensed to perform services in the State of Connecticut. Firms selected  
through the RFQ process will be invited to submit fee proposals for the A&E services required  
for the Major Renovations at Grove Court project.

Grove Court and Grove Court Extension are located at 55 Grove Street, Vernon, CT 06066.  
The property consists of three (3) one-story buildings, four (4) two-story buildings and one (1)  
maintenance building for a total of eight (8) buildings and fifty-four (54) units. The scope of work  
for this Major Renovation project will include, but not necessarily be limited to, ADA upgrades,  
site work, building envelope upgrades, kitchen and bathroom upgrades, electrical upgrades and  
plumbing upgrades.

The services being required by the Housing Authority will include but shall not be limited to  
schematic design, preliminary studies, preparation and design of construction documents,  
work write-ups, energy modeling, cost estimates, evaluation of construction bids, inspection of  
materials and workmanship during construction, and post completion documents for the Major  
Renovations at Grove Court.

The project(s) may be funded by the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA) and / or the  
Connecticut Department of Housing (DOH).

The entire procurement procedure and contract award will be subject to all applicable Federal/  
State Laws and Regulations. The architect/engineer selected shall comply with the Equal  
Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action Requirements adopted by the Authority in  
compliance with said order.

Profiles of the firm's principals, staff and facilities must be submitted along with a list of completed  
projects, especially those completed with DOH or CHFA funds. The architect/engineer  
should specify any work performed under DOH or CHFA Funded Programs including but not  
limited to Competitive Housing Assistance for Multifamily Properties (CHAMP) and/or State  
Sponsored Housing Portfolio (SSHP). A certified statement that the architect/engineer is not  
debarred, suspended, or otherwise prohibited from professional practice by any Federal, State  
or local agency must also be submitted.

In addition, the following insurance will be required and must comply with all DOH & CHFA  
required limits:

1. Professional Liability including Errors and Omissions,
2. Comprehensive General Liability,
3. Automobile Liability,
4. Valuable Papers Destruction policy,
5. Worker's Compensation and Employer Liability policy.

The Architect/Engineer should have previous experience in providing professional services to  
public housing authorities and must display evidence of knowledge of DOH, and CHFA regu-  
lations. Completed current federal GSA Forms 254 and 255 must be submitted.

Evaluation Criteria:  
1. Firm's qualifications - history and resource capability to perform required services in a timely  
manner (20 Points).  
2. Evaluation of staff personnel including subconsultants (20 Points).  
3. DOH/CHFA experience, including but not limited to the Competitive Housing Assistance  
for Multifamily Properties (CHAMP), State Sponsored Housing Portfolio (SSHP) funds, or other  
relevant DOH/CHFA experience. (25 Points).  
4. Other experience (15 Points).  
5. Cost Competitiveness of Hourly Rates (10 Points)  
6. Overall response to RFQ (10 Points).

All interested firms shall submit three (3) copies of the proposal to:

Betsy R. Soto  
Executive Director, PHM, V.E.M  
Vernon Housing Authority  
21 Court Street  
Vernon, CT 06066

by 2:00 p.m. on or before February 11, 2022.

All proposals should be sent certified mail, hand delivered or delivered by recognized carrier.  
All proposals should be clearly identified as "A&E RFQ Response - Major Renovations at Grove  
Court".

Further information may be obtained by contacting Ms. Betsy R. Soto at (860) 871-0866 ext.  
123 or by writing to the Vernon Housing Authority, 21 Court St. Vernon, CT 06066.

AN AFFIRMATIVE ACTION/EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER  
Small Business Concerns, Minority Business Enterprises, Women Owned  
Business Enterprises and Disabled Persons are encouraged to submit proposals.  
1/29-30/2022 7137724

## Connecticut

### NOTICE

The Hartford Business Improvement District is  
seeking proposals for (1) Signage  
Fabrication and Installation; (2) Exterior  
Paint and Graffiti Coating; and (3) Banner  
Printing and Installation services. RFPs can  
be obtained by contacting Jordan Polon at  
860-728-2289 or jordanpolon@hartfordbid.  
com. Proposals must be received by February  
10, 2022 at 3:00pm.  
1/29 - 2/1/2022 7138155

### Development Coordinator for Parkville Neighborhood Projects Hartford, Connecticut

The Capital Region Development Authority  
("CRDA"), a quasi-public agency of the  
State of Connecticut, is seeking a qualified  
contractor to serve as a development project  
coordinator in the Parkville neighborhood.  
Please see full posting and submission  
requirements at https://crda.net/wp-  
content/uploads/2022/01/1-27-2022-De-  
velopmentCoordinator-ParkvilleProjects.pdf  
1/29/2022 7138155

### EAST HARTFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION

Is requesting proposals from qualifying  
vendors to supply uninterruptible  
Power Supplies (UPS)/Battery Backup to be  
dropped shipped to a district location  
for install in networking closets throughout  
the district by the district IT team.  
East Hartford Public Schools, Department of  
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1110 Main Street, East Hartford, CT 06108  
Request For Proposals - # 1810-22  
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and/or https://www.easthartford.org  
BIDS ARE DUE NO LATER THAN 12:15 PM ON  
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2022  
1/29/2022 7138172

Steve Dale's  
PET WORLD  
Sundays in Smarter Living

### State of Connecticut Court of Probate, Central Connecticut Regional Children's Probate Court District

NOTICE TO Kevin Morant, whose last known  
residence was in the town of Hartford, CT.  
Pursuant to an order of Hon. Joseph D.  
Marino, Judge, a hearing will be held at  
Central Connecticut Regional Children's  
Probate Court, 1501 East Main Street,  
Suite 203, Meriden, CT 06450 on February  
9, 2022 at 10:30 AM on a petition for  
Temporary Custody Pending Removal of  
Guardian concerning a certain minor child  
born on January 2, 2007. The court's deci-  
sion will affect your interest, if any, as in the  
petition on file more fully appears.

RIGHT TO COUNSEL: If the above-named  
person wishes to have an attorney, but is  
unable to pay for one, the court will provide  
an attorney upon proof of inability to pay. Any  
such request should be made immediately by  
contacting the court office where the hearing  
is to be held.

By order of the court

Philip A. Wright, Jr., Administrative Judge  
1/29/22 7112599

### EAST HARTFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION

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https://portal.ct.gov/DAS/CTSource/  
BidBoard  
and/or https://www.easthartford.org  
BIDS ARE DUE NO LATER THAN 12:30 PM ON  
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2022  
1/29/2022 7138173

Steve Dale's  
PET WORLD  
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IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE THIRTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,  
IN AND FOR HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, STATE OF FLORIDA  
FAMILY LAW DIVISION

IN THE MATTER OF THE ADOPTION OF:  
H.D.N.

Case No.: 21-DR-017148  
Division: A

Adoptee. \_\_\_\_\_/

### NOTICE OF ACTION FOR TERMINATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS AND STEPPARENT ADOPTION

TO: Milagros Monique Ortiz, biological mother of the male child born on March 13, 2009  
Current Residence Address: 26 Sherman Street, Apt. B3, Hartford, CT, 06105  
YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED that a Joint Petition for Adoption by Stepparent and Termination  
of Parental Rights has been filed by Petitioner Erica Diaz, and father, Ferdinand Nunery, Jr.,  
regarding a minor male child born to Milagros Monique Ortiz on March 13, 2009, in the Bronx,  
New York. The biological mother is Hispanic, 34 years old, approximately 5'7" tall and 175 lbs.,  
with brown hair and brown eyes. All other physical characteristics and her residence address  
are unknown and cannot be reasonably ascertained.  
There will be a hearing on the Joint Petition for Adoption by Stepparent and Termination of  
Parental Rights on March 29, 2022, at 11:45am eastern time, before Judge Jared E. Smith at  
the George E. Edgecomb Courthouse, 800 East Twiggis Street, Courtroom 411, Tampa, Florida  
33602. The Court has set aside 15 minutes for the hearing which will be held via Zoom at the  
following link: https://zoom.us/j/96980509625?pwd=VEJ0VE9XZjZlcjQ0TnRlbnRlYU90. Zoom Meeting ID: 969 8050 9625. Zoom phone number: (786)635-1003. The grounds for  
termination of parental rights are those set forth in §63.089 of the Florida Statutes.  
You may object by appearing at the hearing and filing a written objection with the Court. If you  
desire counsel and believe you may be entitled to representation by a court-appointed attorney,  
you must contact the Clerk of Court and request that an "Affidavit of Indigent Status" be mailed  
to you for completion and return to the Office of the Clerk of Court.  
A copy of any written defenses must be served on Petitioner's attorney, Melissa A. Cordon, PA.,  
806 East Jackson Street, Suite Lower A, Tampa, Florida 33602, (813)223-1177, and file the  
original response or pleading with the Clerk of the Circuit Court of Hillsborough County, Florida,  
800 East Twiggis Street, Tampa, Florida 33602, (813)276-8100, on or before March 4, 2022,  
a date which is a date not less than 28 nor more than 60 days after the first publication of  
this Notice.  
UNDER §63.089, FLORIDA STATUTES, FAILURE TO FILE A WRITTEN RESPONSE TO THIS NOTICE  
WITH THE COURT AND TO APPEAR AT THIS HEARING CONSTITUTES GROUNDS UPON WHICH  
THE COURT SHALL END ANY PARENTAL RIGHTS YOU MAY HAVE REGARDING THE MINOR CHILD.

If you are a person with a disability who needs any accommodation in order to participate in  
this proceeding, you are entitled, at no cost to you, to the provision of certain assistance.  
Please contact the ADA Coordinator, Hillsborough County Courthouse, (813)272-7040. Hearing  
impaired 1-800-955-8771, Voice impaired 1-800-955-8770, email ADA@tjud13.org at least 7  
days before your scheduled court appearance, or immediately upon receiving this notification.  
If you are hearing or voice impaired, call 711.

Name of Newspaper: Hartford Courant

Dated: January 28, 2022  
CINDY STUART  
CLERK OF COURT & COMPTROLLER  
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY FLORIDA

1/29, 2/5, 2/12, 2/19/2022 7125913



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Frederick Debonee, Sr.  
Elaine L. Mayland

Meriden

Joan B. Dyer  
Shauniqua Vieira

Middletown

Stefania Szady

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Benito Del Rio

Newington

Yukiko Field

Other Towns in CT

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Carol Halstead

Simsbury

Clara G. Misiorski

South Windsor

Janice Polk

Vernon

Kevin R. Meehan

Wethersfield

Carol Halstead

\* Denotes name listing only.

Please note: not all death notices are in alphabetical order.

OBITUARIES

Bernard, Knollys

Knollys Bernard, 72, of East Hartford, CT passed away on 1/16/2022. Knollys was predeceased by his wife Castenia Bernard. He is survived by 1 Brother, 4 Children and 7 grandchildren. Funeral service will be Saturday, January 29, 10 am with calling hour 9 am at ALL FAITH MEMORIAL CHAPEL, 90 John Fitch Blvd. So. Windsor, V. Burial will be Monday, January 31, 2022 at 10.am in Spring Grove Cemetery, Hartford, CT.

Please sign guestbook at [courant.com/obituaries](http://courant.com/obituaries)

Dyer, Joan B.



Joan B. (Kapitzke) Dyer, beloved wife of LeRoy E. Dyer of 61 years, passed away on Wednesday January 26, 2022 peacefully at home. Joan was born in Meriden, CT on March 20, 1930, the daughter of Ralph I. and Irene (Vaughn) Kapitzke. She has been a resident of Middletown since 1970.

Joan was educated in the Meriden School system and graduated with honors from Meriden High School in 1947. During these formative years, her outgoing, vivacious personality led her to be involved in a variety of activities including plays, public speaking, poetry club, and chorus. It was said of her in her yearbook that "Joan has a way of making her way straight into your heart. If you ever see Joan when she hasn't a cute answer or a sweet "hi," something's really wrong." In the popularity poll, Joan rates among the highest."

For all who knew her, that early description was apropos. She was a delight with her upbeat attitude and positive outlook on life. She loved engaging people in conversation and she always had a quip or remark that would result in gales of laughter.

Joan worked for a short time as a dental assistant to Dr.'s Kaller and Leades in Meriden before deciding to become a teacher. She graduated from Central Connecticut State College with honors, and involved herself in a myriad of activities and her flair for the dramatic led to the lead in the senior class play. Joan's natural beauty led to appearances in fashion shows and modeling for local merchants during her college years.

She began her teaching career at Jonathan Trumbull Elementary School in Meriden, was selected and transferred to a brand-new Nathan Hale Elementary as a master teacher, training future teachers and teaching 4th grade. She finished her Meriden career at John Barry Elementary School. After her marriage in 1958, she and her husband Lee both taught at Middlefield Memorial School. After regionalization with Durham, Joan taught remedial reading on a part time basis to youngsters at John Lyman School and the old Center School in Middlefield. She somehow juggled her part time schedule and raised three children during this time. Joan was an exceptional teacher, one who could relate to children so that they were challenged in a positive way. She made learning fun with games, stories, incentives and all methods kids could enjoy. She instituted a very successful program called Electronic Bookshelf at John Lyman. Her expertise in dealing with children who were having difficulties learning to read found those children and parents still praising her skills long after her retirement in 1994.

Joan was active in her church, Saint Pius X, and served a term as President of the church council as well as teaching in the CCD program. She was involved in the Xavier Home School Association during the years her boys attended Xavier, and volunteered her time to a number of charitable organizations, canvassing for the Heart Association, Cancer, American Lung Association, Diabetes and others.

In 2014, Joan wrote a book, "Thou Shall Not..." containing humorous episodes of Catholic School in the 1930's and 1940's.

Joan enjoyed using the computer and helping her older son, Lee, with his business by assisting with bookkeeping. Naturally, her greatest joy in life was her family. The family trips together, the holidays, and special occasions brought immense pleasure to her. She adored her two grandchildren, Oliver and Owen. She cherished hearing from them and the stories about them. She detailed these anecdotes in her diary which she faithfully kept for years. She had a very special relationship with her daughter, Sherri, talking on the phone almost every day, sharing stories, laughs and concerns. She had so many friends and will be sorely missed by everyone who knew her. She is survived by her sons, LeRoy "Lee" of Middletown and his girlfriend Katherine Tederous of Rocky Hill; Thomas and his partner, Diana Payne of Middletown; and daughter, Sharon, husband, Eric, and grandsons, Oliver and Owen of Slingerlands, NY.

A funeral liturgy will be held Tuesday February 1, 2022 at 10 a.m. at Saint Pius X Church, 310 Westfield Street, Middletown. Friends may call at Biega Funeral home 3 Silver Street, Middletown on Monday from 5 to 7 p.m. Memorial contributions may be sent to St. Pius X Church or the American Cancer Society. To share memories or express condolences online please visit [www.biegafuneralhome.com](http://www.biegafuneralhome.com).

Please sign guestbook at [courant.com/obituaries](http://courant.com/obituaries)

Field, Yukiko



June 1, 1939-January 23, 2022

This world has lost a wonderful, caring, smart and creative woman, Yukiko - my wife! She and I were blessed to have had 48 years together before Alzheimers/Dementia stole into the picture. Yuki is now in a happier place that she shares with her beloved mother and father. My memories are my treasures. My mother called Yuki "the Pearl of the Orient". Indeed! - Corky

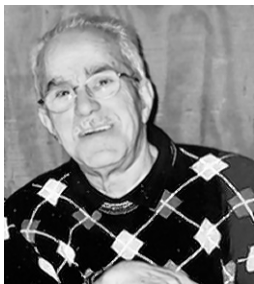
In lieu of flowers, please donate (if wished) to a charity. Services are private and at the convenience of the family.

Neptune Cremation Service has care of arrangements.

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OBITUARIES

Del Rio, Benito



August 31, 1929- January 24, 2022

Benito Del Rio, affectionately known as Benny or Abuelo, passed away peacefully surrounded by family on January 24, 2022, at the age of 92. Benito was born on August 31, 1929 in Havana, Cuba. He moved to the United States in 1959 and settled in New Britain, CT with his loving wife of 63 years, Julia (Padilla) Del Rio. Benito was employed as a machinist at Fafnir-Bearing Co. for thirty years, retiring in 1992. He was a loving husband, father, grandfather and uncle. Benny enjoyed cooking, spending time with his family and friends and his beloved dog, Mia.

Benito is survived by his wife, Julia, his three daughters, Irene Del Rio and her husband Thomas Mione, Sabrina Sonstrom and her husband, Mark and Lisa Del Rio and six grandchildren, Stefanie (Sonstrom) Reed and her husband Adam, William Kuzara and his wife Anna Mertelsmann, Lindsay Kuzara and her partner Bryan Edwards, Eric Sonstrom and his fiancé Sarah Ray, Megan Leavenworth and her partner Patrick O'Rourke and Abigail Leavenworth and many nieces, nephews and friends.

Family and friends may call at the Paul A. Shaker Funeral Home 764 Farmington Avenue, New Britain on Saturday, February 5, 2022 from 12:00 noon to 2:00 PM. Benny's family thanks everyone for their support during this difficult time. The family thanks the staff at Autumn Lake HealthCare of New Britain for the care and support they provided. He will be deeply missed and forever remembered. To share a memory of Benny, please visit: [www.shakerfuneralhome.com](http://www.shakerfuneralhome.com)

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HALSTEAD, Carol (Plasino)



Carol (Plasino) Halstead, 82, of Rocky Hill, beloved wife of the late John W. Halstead, passed away peacefully at home with her family by her side on Sunday, January 23, 2022. Born and raised in Hartford on December 23, 1939, she was the daughter of the late Matthew and Assunta (Armentano) Plasino. Carol was a graduate of Holy Trinity

High School in Hartford. Professionally Carol worked as a secretary for the State of CT Department of Transportation, where she met her future husband. Carol was known for her active church and community volunteerism. She taught catechism, delivered meals on wheels for AIDS patients, held leadership positions at the Women's Club of Incarnation Church, and instructed nursery schoolers at the YWCA. In her spare time Carol enjoyed hosting card games with close friends, holidays with family, and cheering on UCONN basketball teams.

She touched many lives with her welcoming disposition, quick sense of humor, and always placed the well-being of others before her own. Carol leaves behind two children, her daughter Elizabeth Boni and her son-in-law, Jonathan Boni, and her son, John Halstead, as well as several cousins. A heartfelt appreciation is acknowledged for her truly wonderful caregivers (Ruby, Maria, and Bozena) who provided tireless care.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 10:00 a.m. on Monday, (January 31st) the Church of the Incarnation, 544 Prospect Street, Wethersfield. Everyone is asked to please go directly to the church. Burial will immediately follow at Cedar Hill Cemetery, Hartford.

To share a memory of Carol with her family, please visit [www.desopofuneralchapel.com](http://www.desopofuneralchapel.com).



D'Esopo  
Funeral Chapel

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Kotch, Esther M. (Aletta)



Esther Kotch, a long-time resident of Middletown, Connecticut passed away from Covid-19 on January 24, 2022. Passing away in Mount Laurel, New Jersey where she lived with her daughter Rosemarie, she was surrounded by loving family. Esther was born on April 15, 1927, to her parents Nicolo and Rose Aletta in Middletown, Connecticut.



Growing up during the Great Depression, she became a strong-willed and determined woman who overcame many obstacles in her life with a positive can-do approach.

She married and raised four children and later went back to school to obtain her high school diploma. She was the first person in her family to graduate from high school and held a lifelong belief in the importance of education and hard work and instilled these beliefs in her four children. Esther enjoyed writing and frequently sent letters to her family and friends. She was a gifted storyteller and won a literary award for one of her short stories. She volunteered to teach English as a second language to non-native speakers through the Russell Library in Middletown and helped many new Italian immigrants gain a grasp of the English language. During the 1970's, Esther began a career in real estate that lasted for over twenty years.

As a mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother, Esther was an inspiration to her family. She was always happy to welcome her family and friends to her home. She was a remarkable cook and enjoyed preparing an abundance of good food for everyone, with a knack for remembering each person's favorite dish. For many years leading up to her passing, she showed her love by baking her special Italian cookies and sending them across the country to her family, friends, and to those she wished to thank for some kindness. She shared her joy of cooking with her loved ones but never quite gave away the secrets of her favorite recipes.

Esther had a wonderful sense of humor and a contagious laugh. She often had those around her laughing uncontrollably. She had numerous hobbies including walking, reading mysteries and quilting. She created many beautiful handmade quilts that she gave to family and friends to commemorate special life events.

Esther was predeceased by her loving husband of 45 years, Thomas Kotch. She was also predeceased by her sons William Shingleton and Michael Shingleton. Esther is survived by her daughters, Denise del Busto and Rosemarie (Debbie) Fusco. She is also survived by seven grandchildren: William Shingleton, Nicholas Shingleton, Jeremy Shingleton, David Shingleton, Louis A. Fusco, Eric Fusco, and Nicole M. Fusco, seven great-grandchildren and her sisters Josephine Vonella and Natalie Cianci.

A memorial service is being planned in Connecticut for the near future. The family will notify loved ones when the service is scheduled. The family requests those who wish to express sympathy to consider donating to Duke University Cancer Research at <http://www.dukecancerinstitute.org/index.php/give>

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Cornell, Maureen (Halligan)



Maureen Halligan Cornell, 66, of Hartford, Connecticut, passed away peacefully on January 26, 2022.

Maureen was predeceased by her parents, William K. Halligan and Anne House. She is survived by her daughter Amanda Gagnon and husband Eric of Enfield; her son Sean Cornell and fiancé Katlin of Ellington; sister, Luci Tremblay and husband Gene of Winthrop, ME; her brother, Barry Halligan and wife Lisa of Rocky Hill; her 3 grandchildren, Ethan, Lennox and Noah; and her dearest cat, Ulysses. The service will be private at the convenience of her family.

Please sign guestbook at [courant.com/obituaries](http://courant.com/obituaries)

Mayland, Elaine L (England)

Elaine Loomis Mayland, Ph.D. passed away peacefully in her sleep on Tuesday, January 18th after a long battle with Alzheimer's. Elaine was born Elaine May England in Manchester, CT on July 5, 1928. She attended local schools and remained in Manchester, where she raised her family and enjoyed her career in administration at Manchester Memorial Hospital. During these years she followed her interests with passion, becoming an accomplished sculptor, painter and poet. She also earned her college degree, receiving her BA in 1973 from Goddard College.

Looking for a new adventure, in 1975 she moved to California, and earned her Master's Degree (1983) and her Doctorate (1985) from the California Institute of Transpersonal Psychology in Palo Alto. Elaine with her mentor, colleague and friend Marion Rosen, helped start the Rosen Institute in Berkeley, CA, where students are trained and certified in Rosen Method Bodywork. Elaine developed the training program and wrote the training manual for the Rosen Method of wholeness and well-being. She led the way to making Rosen Method trainings available to students worldwide, opening training centers in Scandinavia, Switzerland, France, Canada, Holland and Mexico. Elaine also maintained a private practice in Palo Alto, CA. She returned to Connecticut in 2008 and enjoyed her retirement, residing at Stoneridge in Mystic.

Elaine will be deeply missed by her long-time friend and companion, Dr. Martin Duke, Mystic; her son, Ted Malek (w. Pip Fritzsche), Mystic; her daughter Jane Malek (h. Vic Mitchell), Monterey, CA; grandson, Burke Malek (w. Jackie), Pelham, NY; granddaughter, Anna Kaufman (h. Justin), Pawcatuck; four great-grandchildren, Mason, Taylor, Molly, Everly; sister Louise C. England, Manchester; brother, Franklin England, Coventry; brother, Arthur England, Manchester; brother, Wayne England (w. Ann), Vernon; sister -in-law, Jan England, Coventry; many nieces and nephews; as well as an entire community of students and colleagues around the world. Her family and friends were all enriched by her knowledge, determination and her adventurous spirit. Her family would like to thank the nurses and staff of Brookdale Buckingham in Glastonbury for their loving care of Elaine in her final days. Burial will be a private family ceremony.

Please sign guestbook at [courant.com/obituaries](http://courant.com/obituaries)

Misiorski, Clara G.



Clara (Skip) Gertrude Misiorski

Clara (Skip) was born February 19, 1935, and passed from this life to the next on January 17, 2022, just shy of her 87th birthday. She was the youngest of 13 children born in Swansea, Massachusetts to Edith and William Peters. She was nicknamed Skipper because she

always had to skip to keep up with her older siblings. Her brother was the bestower of nicknames and eventually shortened it to Skip.

Skip married Frank Misiorski, whom she met at Joseph Case High School. They were married for 61 years until his passing in 2017.

While raising 5 children, she pursued an associate degree in Childhood Development, worked at Waring Products in the accounting department, was a licensed Real Estate agent, and served as an EMT for the New Hartford Volunteer Ambulance Company. Skip was active in her children's activities, becoming a band parent and working multiple musical theater productions. She was an avid fan of UCONN Women's Basketball. Skip was also active in the New Hartford Senior Citizens and helped organize group walking trips.

Skip passed peacefully and her wishes to have her body donated to science were granted by the UCONN Medical School. When discussing this desire with her children, she was asked if she didn't think she'd be too old to do that, to which she replied, "they need old people too!" She would be thrilled to know that she is helping to educate future medical students, who one day will care for so many others.

Skip is survived by her 5 children: Marcia Misiorski, Cindy (Randy) Cole, Chris (Sue) Misiorski, Mike (Mary) Misiorski and Donna (Bruce) Felix. She is also survived by 9 grandchildren and 5 great grandchildren. She will be greatly missed.

A Celebration of Life will be scheduled at a later date. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made via check to the New Hartford Senior Center c/o New Hartford Town Hall, 530 Main St, P.O. Box 316, New Hartford CT 06057.

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Polk, Janice (Olsen)



Janice (Olsen) Polk, 79, of South Windsor, beloved wife of Curtis H. Polk died unexpectedly on Sunday January 23, 2022, at Manchester Memorial Hospital. Janice was kind, loving, compassionate, and caring. Her light and loving heart touched everyone who knew her. Her family was her greatest joy. She loved unconditionally

and treasured every moment.

In her later years, she worked part time for Juniper Hill Village, Storrs CT, on the waitstaff. She adored that job and the people she helped. After retiring, she and her husband enjoyed activities such as having coffee together, lunch dates, visiting the senior center, and activities to do together. She was deeply spiritual. She loved the Lord, and prayed for all of her family daily. Her love, smiles, hugs, silly quirks, contagious giggles, and unique character will be missed by all who knew her.

Janice was born in Worcester, MA on October 18, 1942, daughter of the late Conrad and Marion (Shea) Olsen. Janice grew up in Worcester MA and was a graduate of South High School. She went on to attend Berkshire Christian College in Lenox, MA. Along with her husband Curtis of over 58 years, she leaves her daughters, Norma Murphy and her companion Roy MacDonald of Coventry, Julie Hasselberger and her husband John of Sandy Hook, Heather Polk and her companion Nolan Remillard of Bristol; five grandchildren; two great grandchildren; two sisters-in-law, Joan Olsen of Windsor Locks, and Evelyn Olsen of Jacksonville, FL; and many nieces and nephews. She was predeceased by her brothers, Norman Olsen, Robert Olsen, and Kenneth Olsen.

Calling hours will be held on Tuesday, February 1, 2022, from 4-6 p.m.; followed by a prayer service at 6 p.m., at the Samsel & Carmon Funeral Home, 419 Buckland Rd., South Windsor. For online condolences please visit [www.carmonfuneralhome.com](http://www.carmonfuneralhome.com)

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OBITUARIES

DeBonee Sr., Frederick



Frederick DeBonee Sr. Passed away on Thursday January 20th 2022, at the University of Virginia Medical Center at the age of 84. Fred was born and raised in Hartford where he resided for 79 years. He was a long-time member of St. Lawrence O'Toole as Sacristan for 45 years. In 1992 he retired from a long career of 35 years with State of Connecticut's Department of Motor Vehicle. He leaves behind his beloved wife Maryann DeBonee, his son Frederick DeBonee Jr., his stepdaughter Lisa Demko countless cousins, nieces, nephews, friends and his Siberian Husky Kota. Calling hours will be held on Tuesday (2/1) from 5pm-8pm at Molloy Funeral Home, 906 Farmington Ave., West Hartford. A Mass of Christian Burial will be on Wednesday (2/2) at 10 am in at St. Lawrence O'Toole, Hartford. Burial will follow in Cedar Hill Cemetery, Hartford. Online expressions of sympathy may be made at [www.molloyfuneralhome.com](http://www.molloyfuneralhome.com)  
*Please sign guestbook at [courant.com/obituaries](http://courant.com/obituaries)*

Forster, Bernice

Bernice (Holehouse) Forster, 81, longtime resident of Bloomfield, beloved wife of the late Donald C. Forster was reunited with her husband on Tuesday, January 18, 2022. She was born in Hartford on March 4, 1940, to the late Russell and Madeline Holehouse. Bernice was a loving mother, grandmother, sister, and friend. She enjoyed nothing more than to dance, to enjoy life to its fullest with close friends, and to spend time with her family, especially with her grandchildren at their backyard pool. Bernice is survived by her two loving children, Lori McLoughlin of Windsor, and Ron Forster and his wife Tricia of Bloomfield; five grandchildren, Will Forster, Emma Forster, Andrew McLoughlin, Katie McLoughlin, and Ryan McLoughlin; and her brother, Ronald Holehouse and his husband Joel of Sacramento, CA. She was predeceased by her sister, June Kukuryk. All services will be private. Carmon Funeral Home has been entrusted with the arrangements. For online expressions of sympathy please visit, [www.carmonfuneralhome.com](http://www.carmonfuneralhome.com).  
  
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Szady, Stefania (Szot)

Stefania (Szot) Szady, 90, of Middletown, formerly of Cromwell, wife of late Wladyslaw Szady, died Wednesday January 19, 2022 at Middlesex Hospital. She was born in Poland, the daughter of the late Kazimierz and Julia (Kielbasa) Szot. Prior to her retirement, Stefania had been employed at Travelers Insurance Co., currently called CITI group. She is survived by her daughters, Eugenia Szady of Middletown, Emilia Janas and her husband Jozef Janas of Middletown; sister Karolina Szot of Hartford; brother Emili Szot and his wife Genevieve of Newington; two grandchildren Mark Szady and Pawel Michalczuk. Her Funeral Liturgy will be held Monday (Jan. 31st) at 10:30 am, at St. Mary of Czestochowa Church, 79 South Main St., Middletown. Burial will be in Calvary Cemetery, Middletown. Friends may call at Biega Funeral Home, 3 Silver St., Middletown, on Monday 9 to 10 am. To share memories or express condolences online please visit [www.biegafuneralhome.com](http://www.biegafuneralhome.com).  
*Please sign guestbook at [courant.com/obituaries](http://courant.com/obituaries)*

Vieira, Shauniqua



A Life Remembered. Shauniqua Vieira of New York, born Shauniqua Elizabeth Passe on September 3rd, 1963, passed away on January 22nd, 2022 in Meriden, CT. She was born to the late Ivalina Jones-Passe and Joey Passe of Queens, New York. Shauniqua spent more than two decades with UPS, before moving to Connecticut with her late husband, Dana Vieira. During her time in Connecticut, she made many friends, bonded with family, built a house with her husband from the ground up, and started a new career with New Britain Transportation, where she won the sate driving award. She studied meticulously to get her CDL and worked long hours to make sure her family would be financially secure. She was also a phenomenal cook; her food was always made with love. Shauniqua leaves behind her two daughters, Shayna L. Stefford and Autumn L. Vieira, her son-in-law Joshua C. Parmlee, her granddaughter Asha M. Parmlee, her sister Ivalina Passe, her brother Josepi Passe, her niece Tyler C. Watson, her sisters-in-law Kelley Vieira and Deborah Vieira, her brother-in-law Albert Vieira, Jr., her mother-in-law, Catherine Vieira, her niece-in-law Amber Shumate and Amber's husband, Tyrus Williams. We all shared a life together just one yard apart and we will cherish this time we had with her and her husband. Shauniqua has always been a creative, kind and caring soul. Her eyes were so warm and comforting and she had the soul to match. Everything she did, she did with love and with the thought of "how will this affect my husband, children and family?" She stood tall and powerful and she has left a hole in our hearts with her departure from this earthly plane. But we know she and Dana will be here to watch over and guide us through our day to day lives, as we wait for the Lord to call us home. The family would like to express gratitude for everyone's kindness in our time of loss. We will be holding a small and private service due to restrictions, only family and close friends will be in attendance. We thank you for all of the support that everyone has given our family in our tremendous time of grief. The Paul A. Shaker Funeral Home, 764 Farmington Ave, New Britain, CT has charge of arrangements. Condolences to Shauniqua's family may be made to: [shakerfuneralhome.com](http://shakerfuneralhome.com)  
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Hartford Courant

# CONNECTICUT

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## Murphy eyes ‘bolder’ mental health reform bill

Senator talks with leaders at Connecticut Children’s to discuss ongoing crisis, brainstorm solutions

By Eliza Fawcett  
Hartford Courant

With an eye toward developing the “next generation” of federal mental health reform legislation, Sen. Chris Murphy met with the leadership of Connecticut Children’s Medical Center Friday morning to discuss the ongoing crisis in

children’s psychiatric care and brainstorm solutions.

“We’re at the tip of the iceberg and we need to acknowledge this at a national level,” Dr. Juan Salazar, the hospital’s physician-in-chief and chair of pediatrics, told Murphy, assembled around a table with other hospital directors at the hospital’s Hartford offices.

Encountering an 8-year-old who has attempted suicide is “beyond my ability to understand,” Salazar added, and yet, it “happens almost daily.”

In 2016, President Barack Obama signed the Mental Health Reform Act, co-authored by Murphy, a Connecticut Democrat, and Sen. Bill Cassidy, a Louisiana Republican, into law. The law expanded federal resources for addressing mental health issues and bolstered community treatment services. Six years

later, Murphy is hoping to “be a little bit bolder” with a revised mental health bill, including by focusing on children’s mental health and potentially tackling reimbursement issues.

“We’re not adapting,” Murphy said. “We’re seeing this increase in children’s mental health cases, but the system isn’t adapting fast enough to this new reality and I hope this legislation will force that adaptation.”

Addressing children’s mental health care has emerged as a prior-

ity for state and federal lawmakers in recent months. In Connecticut, Children’s reached a crisis point last fall, as its emergency department was deluged with children seeking urgent behavioral health care. More recently, behavioral health experts, doctors and community providers have stressed to state lawmakers that staffing shortages, reimbursement rate disparities and lack of throughput — the ability to move

Turn to Health, Page 2



Connecticut chambers of commerce have launched a campaign called “Order Direct and Pick It Up” to discourage customers from using restaurant delivery apps that often charge high fees. **COURANT FILE**

## ‘Pick it up’ drive urges ditching delivery apps

Chamber of Commerce initiative comes as restaurants complain that third-party services eat up large profits

By Susan Dunne  
Hartford Courant

Third-party restaurant delivery apps such as Uber Eats, GrubHub and DoorDash are in the crosshairs of two Connecticut chambers of commerce, which launched an initiative to discourage using them.

“Order Direct and Pick It Up” was initiated by the Westport-Weston Chamber of

Commerce in the last few weeks. The Central Connecticut Chambers of Commerce, which represents businesses in Farmington, Bristol, Burlington, Wolcott, Plainville and Plymouth, liked the idea and ran with it, too.

Matthew Mendell of the Westport-Weston chamber said he started the initiative after several local restaurants complained to him. “The fees the third parties were charging were taking all their profits away,” Mendell said.

“The national apps take 30% for an order. That’s not an acceptable number. Even if someone orders through the app and picks up, it’s 25% just for taking the order,” Mendell said. “If you call the restaurant directly or go to its website, that’s the best way to accomplish the order without gutting them.”

Since the pandemic began, demand for food delivery and takeout has skyrocketed. For many, the convenience of the apps is irresistible. But restaurants nationwide have reported that fees charged by apps cut their already-single-digit profit margin down to almost nothing.

Turn to Delivery, Page 2

### CORONAVIRUS IN CONNECTICUT

## Cases at lowest level of year

Numbers high relative to pre-omicron totals

By Alex Puttermann  
Hartford Courant

Connecticut reported its fewest new COVID-19 cases in a given day since mid-December on Friday, as the state’s test positivity rate hit its lowest level in a month.

Though Connecticut continues to see far more coronavirus cases and hospitalizations than it did most of last year, before the arrival of the omicron variant, the state’s trends remain encouraging.

“There is a light at the end of the tunnel,” Dr. Ulysses Wu, chief epidemiologist at Hartford Health-Care, said Friday. “Maybe not the end of the pandemic, but at least the end of this wave.”

### Cases and positivity rate

Connecticut on Tuesday reported 2,684 new COVID-19 cases out of 27,834 tests, for a daily positivity rate of 9.73%. The state’s seven-day positivity rate now stands at 11.2%, down from 23.6% earlier this month and the lowest it has been since late December.

Connecticut has now averaged 3,485 daily COVID-19 cases over the past week, down from more than 10,000 at one point earlier this month. Unvaccinated residents have been about three times as likely to test positive in recent weeks as vaccinated residents, according to state numbers.

Still, all eight Connecticut counties — along with nearly the rest of the country — are recording “high” levels of COVID-19 transmission as defined by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. With this level of transmission, the CDC advises people to wear a mask in public indoor settings.

### Hospitalizations

As of Friday, Connecticut had 1,192 patients hospitalized with COVID-19, down 78 from Thursday and down from nearly 2,000 earlier this month.

Turn to Virus, Page 2

## Pup Piglet uses stardom for good

Veterinarian uses dog to teach children about disabilities, inclusion

By Susan Dunne  
Hartford Courant

Piglet, a pink, blind and deaf pup who lives with six other dogs in a house in Westport, is oblivious to the fact that he’s a social media star and a novice teacher. His owner, veterinarian Melissa Shapiro, was inspired by her puppy’s plight to create an educational program with Piglet, aka Piggy.

“I am partial to dogs with special needs. That’s my thing,” Shapiro says. “I am advocating for dogs and other animals with disabilities. When we go to see kids, we teach them about resiliency and inclusion. We hope they will take that, the normalizing of disabilities in dogs,



Westport veterinarian Melissa Shapiro and her dog, Piglet, who is a social media star. **MELISSA SHAPIRO/COURTESY**

Turn to Piglet, Page 2

## Proponents of aid-in-dying legislation plan strong push

By Jenna Carlesso  
CT Mirror

More than eight years into her cancer diagnosis, the pain in Kim Hoffman’s body had become constant.

“I can’t remember the last day that I did not experience pain,” Hoffman, 59, of Glastonbury, said in a recent interview. “It has been at least two months of daily, very often intense, sharp, biting pain.”

“I’ve awoken from sleep in pain every night, multiple times. Three o’clock in the morning is a standing hour for me — three o’clock and four o’clock in the morning I can always count on waking up in discomfort or pain.”

In 2013, she was diagnosed with stage three ovarian cancer. During the following years, it spread throughout her body. She was given two to four months to

live last fall.

She died on Jan. 18.

In an interview with the CT Mirror just weeks before her death, Hoffman used some of her remaining strength to call for passage of an aid in dying bill, poised to be a key issue when the state legislature convenes in February. She wished the option had been available to her.

“I am advocating for our legislators to show compassion, kindness, care and sensitivity to those of us who face a terminal diagnosis,” she said. “It is kind and compassionate. It is a choice. It is not forced on anybody.”

“It would give me such a sense of relief and peace. And I should say, it would give my family a sense of relief and peace as well, knowing I’m comforted by that.”

For the first time, a version of

Turn to Dying, Page 2



CONNECTICUT

Virus

from Page 1

Hospital officials say some patients hospitalized with COVID-19 were admitted for non-coronavirus reasons before testing positive upon arrival but that a majority have significant COVID-19 symptoms. According to the state, 54.8% of people hospitalized with COVID-19 are unvaccinated. Hospital officials say the rate is significantly higher when considering only patients with severe symptoms.

Deaths

Connecticut reports COVID-19 deaths on Thursdays. This week, the

state reported 225 deaths, bringing its total during the pandemic to 9,908. COVID-19 deaths — which typically tend to lag other metrics by several weeks — have continued to increase in recent weeks even as cases and hospitalizations have slowed. Unvaccinated people in Connecticut have been about 14 times as likely to die from COVID-19 in recent weeks as those who are vaccinated, according to state numbers. The United States has now recorded 880,866 COVID-19 deaths, according to the Coronavirus Resource Center at Johns Hopkins University.

Vaccinations

As of Friday, 92.3% of all

Connecticut residents and 95% of those 5 and older had received at least one COVID-19 vaccine dose, while 76.4% of all residents and 80.5% of those 5 and older were fully vaccinated, according to the CDC. Additionally, about 50.3% of fully vaccinated Connecticut residents 18 or older have received a booster dose. The CDC warns that booster shots are sometimes misclassified as first doses, likely inflating the reported number of first-dose coverage and understating the true number of people who have received boosters. Alex Putterman can be reached at [aputterman@courant.com](mailto:aputterman@courant.com).

Delivery

from Page 1

Cindy Bombard, president and CEO of the Central chamber, said she implemented a campaign supporting Mendell’s idea in her area to keep dollars in the community. “We all want to support local communities, especially restaurants since COVID hit. If you order food and pick it up, or order through their own delivery system, the money stays with them,” Bombard said. “Third-party apps are now a middleman. That money is not staying local to the restaurant owner.” Bob O’Mahoney, who owns Viva Zapata Mexican restaurant in Westport, said he doesn’t believe the public is fully aware of what the national third-party apps cost restaurants. “They think they are helping a restaurant. And they are, in a way. But they are not thinking that 30% comes off the top,” he said. “On the one hand you need the delivery service to be competitive. But at the same time they’re taking the bottom line out from under you.”

O’Mahoney is working with the Westport-Weston chamber on the initiative, to educate the public. “We need to create an awareness. It’s wonderful you’re supporting local restaurants. But if you can take it a step further and call us to order and pick it up yourself,” he said. “Most restaurants offer contactless pickup or you can call when you arrive.” Some U.S. cities have taken other solutions to help restaurants protect their profits. In early 2021, Jersey City, San Francisco, Seattle and Baltimore and the state of Massachusetts capped third-party delivery fees at 15%. Other cities are considering capping fees, at least until the health crisis ends. Connecticut has not done that. The only piece of legislation on third-party apps enacted in this state mandated that apps get written permission from a restaurant before posting its menu on its website. O’Mahoney, in opposing

the apps, said he is thinking about less fortunate restaurateurs. He said the customer base at his 53-year-old eatery is loyal and he is not hurting as much as other places are. “Are we in danger of going out of business? No. But that 30% would help, absolutely,” he said. “I know other restaurants where that 30% can make or break them.” Yvette Tavares of Connecticut Restaurant Association said CRA’s position on third-party apps is neutral. However, Tavares added that “for some restaurants it’s the right choice. “These third-party apps are a powerful marketing platform. For a lot of restaurants, the frustration at the fees is high. At the same time they need to be on those platforms where the public is,” she said. “If they’re not on there and their competitor is, that’s not good for them. Being on there makes sense.” Joe Sweeney, owner of Pomona Pete’s in Unionville, doesn’t like the apps because they take so much of his profit. But he uses them anyway. He said using them is “a double-edged sword.” “You have to use them. You don’t have a choice. The mentality of the younger generation is, they’re hungry, right away they reach for their phone. How do you compete with that? It’s the world we live in,” Sweeney said. “Also, they’re thinking, I don’t mind paying someone a couple of bucks to drive my food out here when it’s 5 degrees out.” Tavares added that some restaurants don’t want to add delivery to their service. “It’s not easy to add delivery. You have to have a certain kind of insurance. You have to have a staff person who will use their car. It adds a whole other element of managing the business,” she said. “They decide to outsource that.” Phil Chabot, owner of North House in Avon and 1850 House in Southbury, has never used the nationwide third-party apps. “The fees are too high. I can understand it’s a necessary evil for some restaurants, but we’ve never used them,” he said. “A few customers

have complained, but it’s not economically feasible for us. Luckily we have a good customer base.” He uses Dine in CT, a Farmington-based delivery service. Chabot said he prefers that company because it is locally based, the drivers know the area, the fees are lower and Dine handles all the marketing and credit-card processing. “When we get an order from them, we get 80% of the sale,” he said. Tavares said that local third-party delivery services, such as Eat in CT and Eatzy — which runs Shoreline Menus, Nosh Haven and Greater Hartford Menus — show that using the Connecticut-based apps actually is promoting a local business. “Connecticut residents run and operate these delivery services. They are very big on customer service. Some of the complaints we hear about the big guys is that if something goes wrong they are not as quick to resolve issues,” she said. “Small local companies tend to have better service. They can correct any errors that go wrong. They tend to have lower rates and better service.” Andy Knutson, general manager of Naples Pizza in Farmington, doesn’t like the national delivery apps but he likes his affiliation with Eatzy. His complaint with the national apps is both the fees and the service. “As a business, you have expectations of how the product is going to be received by a customer. The third party services are not part of that culture,” he said. “It takes things out of your control a bit. We weren’t happy with that at all.” He ditched the big guys a few months ago and invested in Eatzy. So far so good, he said. “Their percentage from us is 15%. And we are allowed to adjust our prices through them. When you order through them the prices are a little inflated and that makes up for our losses,” he said. Susan Dunne can be reached at [sdunne@courant.com](mailto:sdunne@courant.com).

CORRECTION

The story “Deal would expand access to schools,” on page 1 of Friday’s Courant incorrectly stated the number of new magnet school seats to be created under the 2020 Sheff v. O’Neill agreement. The agreement aimed to create up to 700 new seats, 350 for Hartford students.

Piglet

from Page 1

and extend that to people as well.” Piglet and his canine mates — Gina, Dean, Annie, Evie, Zoey and Lucy — are an example of that inclusion. Piglet wanders among them, sometimes bumping into them because he can’t see and not hearing when they bark to complain. But the barks die down and the dogs are happy. “The dogs get along so well. They are all different colors, shapes, personalities, sizes, ages, sexes. Not only do they accept Piglet but they also all accept each other,” Shapiro says. After taking in Piglet in March 2017, Shapiro put him on social media. He has 270,000 followers on Instagram, 221,000 on Facebook and 30,000 on TikTok. Shapiro parlayed Piglet’s fame into Piglet Mind-set Educational Outreach, a program for schools and libraries to teach empathy, kindness, inclusion and triumphing over adversity. The program also encourages adoption of pets with special needs. Shapiro later turned the educational initiative into a nonprofit, Piglet International. She also published “Piglet, The Unexpected Story of a Deaf Blind Pink Puppy and His Family,” in 2021. In June, a children’s book, “Piglet Comes Home,” will be published. Profits from the books fund the educational initiative. A difficult beginning Piglet is a Chihuahua-dachshund mix, with a genetic condition called double dapple that causes eyesight and hearing difficulties. His breed mix causes a coat so sparse his pink skin shows. He was born in Georgia in “a hoarding situation. The people started out with three dogs who were not spayed. It turned into about 30 dogs,” she says. “They were not abused. They were neglected.” After the dogs’ owners were evicted, they advertised the dogs on Craig’s List. A rescue group saw the ad. “They met them at a gas station next to a Walmart. The dogs were in rusty crates in the back of a truck,” Shapiro says. “They transferred over about 11 dogs. Piglet was one of them. He was very tiny, probably about two weeks old. He was there with his mom, Abigail, and three of his littermates. Three out of four of them were double dapples.” Shapiro took Piglet in as a foster dog. “He was a 1-½ pound screaming anxious baby dog. It took months, but Piglet eventually settled into a comfortable, predictable daily routine,” she says. Piglet fit in so well at Shapiro’s dog-filled house that she adopted him. She taught him tap signals to communicate. From the start, Piglet went straight to Shapiro’s heart. “My first dog was blind. That was normalized for me when I was just 6 years old. From there, I worked in a diabetes lab in medical school. I adopted a dog that was diabetic and needed shots twice a day,” she says. “I find it rewarding to help the ones others can’t. I’m a vet. I have access to care other

people don’t.” Schools, libraries Last November, Piglet and Shapiro virtually visited Highland Elementary School in Cheshire. Second-grade teacher Jodie Monillos says the visit enhanced the school’s social and emotional learning curriculum. “A lot of times, kids look at things and say, I can’t do that. ... We want them to say I can do that,” Monillos says. “We want to change the phrases we use when we come to a difficult task, especially if they need to overcome something challenging or if they have a limitation.” Parent Keri Banak says “Piglet doesn’t know what he can’t do. He has no idea he’s any different than other dogs. He’s not focusing on the fact that he can’t see and hear. He uses what he does have to get all his daily tasks done.” Willington Library brought Piglet in for a visit in October. “He has overcome all of these things. This is a creature who can’t express himself. He has just learned to adapt,” says Librarian Debbie Linares. “Melissa has trained him. It’s as if he can see and hear even though he can’t see and hear. “How much can we achieve if he can achieve all that? It’s quite the lesson for people of any age or capability.” Shapiro and Piglet will make an appearance on Feb. 19 at 2 p.m. at the Bristol Public Library, 5 High St. Admission is free. To RSVP, go to [bristollib.com](http://bristollib.com). Susan Dunne can be reached at [sdunne@courant.com](mailto:sdunne@courant.com).

Health

from Page 1

patients through the flow of medical services — remain critical issues. “The system was under-resourced before the pandemic, and this has just surfaced all the gaps that existed,” said Howard Sovronsky, the chief behavioral health officer at Children’s. “The [intensive outpatient programs] were insufficiently resourced to begin with — there weren’t enough slots. Now, the need has quadrupled.” Allison Matthews-Wilson, the director of care coordination for Children’s, told Murphy that her teams work in the emergency department to move children through various levels of care. But often the required level of care cannot be obtained, forcing the hospital to patch together solutions. “We create bandaids and wrap these kids in less-than services,” she said. “We try to make up for it with some

of the safety nets that the state of Connecticut has — emergency mobile psychiatric services, bringing in the pediatrician — but the reality is, is that if services were available, they would require a higher level of care.” At the same time, hospital leaders said, high volumes of children continue to arrive at the emergency department with acute behavioral health needs. Some children have symptoms that have worsened over the course of the pandemic; others had no prior mental health history and are now in crisis. A similar dynamic also plays out in outpatient settings and pediatricians’ offices. “We’re letting them go home with a higher level of symptoms than we’ve ever let them go home with before, because we know that there’s no other option for care,” Melissa Santos, the division chief of pediatric psychology of Children’s, said of outpatient care. David Krol, a pediatrician and the medical director of the hospital’s Care Network,

said that pediatricians are also struggling to contend with greater numbers of children presenting with behavioral health needs. Many pediatricians would be eager to embed behavioral health clinicians in their offices, he said, but often payment issues stand in the way, or there aren’t enough clinicians to fill those roles. Murphy expressed support for bolstering care coordination, as well as an idea floated by Salazar to expand medical residencies in pediatrics to include an additional year focused on child psychiatry. Funding such a program, Salazar argued, would “train the next generation of pediatricians” and rapidly create a workforce equipped to handle children’s behavioral health needs. “That’s one of the clear ideas that I’m going to send my team to work on,” Murphy said following the meeting. Eliza Fawcett can be reached at [elfawcett@courant.com](mailto:elfawcett@courant.com).

Dying

from Page 1

Connecticut’s aid in dying bill made it out of committee in 2021. The Public Health Committee voted 24-9 in favor of sending the measure to the House floor. The bill did not come up for a vote in either chamber, however. It didn’t make it out of the Judiciary Committee. Versions of the bill have been debated as far back as 1994 and have failed at least 14 times. Under last year’s proposal, an adult patient with a terminal illness — having six months or less to live — would have been able to access lethal drugs by making two oral requests at least 15 days apart, and one written request. The written request would have to be done in the presence of two witnesses who could attest that the patient is of sound mind and acting voluntarily. A physician would prescribe or dispense the medication, and the patient would self-administer the drug. Requests for the medication may be rescinded by the patient at any time “without regard to his or her mental state,” according to the measure. A doctor would

have to refer the patient to another consulting physician for medical confirmation of the person’s diagnosis and for confirmation that the patient is competent and acting voluntarily. Although three Republicans joined 21 Democrats in supporting the bill last year, several members of the health committee acknowledged that the bill needed work. As the 2022 session nears, proponents of the measure say they have incorporated the needed revisions and will press for a vote in the House. “We came very close last year,” said Rep. Jonathan Steinberg, a co-chair of the Public Health Committee. “We have looked at the polling statewide, which indicates that the majority of Connecticut citizens are in favor of this. I think we made adjustments to the bill coming out of the committee and hearing processes that will make it have good prospects.” A high priority Steinberg and other leaders on the health committee have marked the proposal “No. 1” in terms of importance during the upcoming session, he said. The Westport Democrat,

who will complete his sixth term in 2022 and is considering not running again, has been a key backer of the legislation and is hoping to oversee its passage in what could be his final year. “We’d like to get ready to go earlier rather than later so it doesn’t become a victim of priorities and the clock ticking out,” Steinberg said. “That’s our objective: Get it ready to go out the door and ready for a vote as quickly as possible.” This year’s effort will involve seeking out “as many co-sponsors as possible,” he said, including members of both parties from both chambers. Steinberg noted that the same people will be returning to the legislature that voted it out of committee in 2021, and that the proposal is gaining favor among the public. He and other proponents have pointed to polling by Compassion and Choices, an advocacy group that supports the legislation, showing 75% of Connecticut residents surveyed back the proposal. The organization polled 550 “likely 2022 general election voters” in March 2021. A Quinnipiac University poll in 2015 found that 63% of voters supported the bill. Aid in dying is legal in Oregon, Washington state,

Montana, Vermont, California, Colorado, Hawaii, New Jersey, Maine, New Mexico and the District of Columbia. “For us, it’s not a question of if the law will pass, it’s a question of when,” said Tim Appleton, senior campaign director with Compassion and Choices. “This issue has been before members of the public health committee on several occasions, and there was a tipping point of education, when people really began to understand exactly what this issue is about. People should have options — all options — at end of life, and aid in dying should be one of them.” For Steinberg, a decade-plus of advocacy on the bill was inspired by a local Westport politician who was an early mentor. William Meyer, a longtime Representative Town Meeting member, had helped his terminally ill father end his life (he was charged with second-degree manslaughter and later placed on probation). Meyer brought the issue of legalizing aid in dying to Steinberg during Steinberg’s first term in the legislature. “I kind of took up the mantle, and it’s been something I’ve been working on for a lot of years,” Steinberg said. Meyer died in 2014.

In what may be his last term and final year as co-chair of the health committee, Steinberg said he hopes the bill will come up for a vote in the House and Senate. “It’s certainly something I’d like to see done on my watch,” he said. “But I’m not exactly sure how long my watch is going to last.” Uncertain path forward Members of Connecticut’s disability community continue to oppose the measure. Cathy Ludlum, head of Second Thoughts Connecticut, a grassroots organization whose advocates are against the legislation, said the proposal puts vulnerable people at greater risk. “The very real likelihood of misdiagnosis, misprognosis, abuse and error is just enormous,” she said. “And when a life is ended, you can’t go back and say, ‘Whoops, that was a mistake.’” “We in the disability community have to keep saying that we don’t want to get in the way of anyone’s personal choice. But when that choice becomes a threat to us, we have to stand up and

say no.” Stephen Mendelsohn, an advocate with Second Thoughts, said the bill “promotes suicide as a solution to problems.” “This is bad social policy that puts everybody’s life in danger,” he said. Senate President Pro Tem Martin Looney, a New Haven Democrat, said it’s too early to speculate on whether the measure will come up for a vote in his chamber. “I couldn’t say at this point whether attitudes have changed, or whether they are evolving,” he said. “We’ve never actually had a full discussion to try to get a sense of it.” House Speaker Matthew Ritter, D-Hartford, said he personally supports the bill. But legislative leaders will have to take a vote count before deciding whether to raise the proposal in the House. “It’s one of those issues where everyone has their own personal feeling about it. It’s not the kind of thing where the speaker can come in and say, ‘Here’s what we’re going to do,’ we got this for you guys,” he said. “This is a very, very emotional, personal thing for members of the caucus. And they will determine the fate of this bill.”



CONNECTICUT

Court shows no interest in remaking CT congressional map

By Mark Pazniokas  
CT Mirror

The Connecticut Supreme Court gave no sign Thursday of a willingness to heed pleas by Republicans to take on the political task of overhauling a congressional map that has produced only Democratic victories since 2008.

The justices asked no questions in a 27-minute hearing, declining to engage in a debate over whether the court should take a more aggressive role when a legislative impasse gives them the final word on redistricting.

As a result, it is likely that Connecticut's congressional map will continue to feature the "lobster claw," the product of a bipartisan map drawn 20 years ago to serve the interests of two incumbents, a Democrat and a Republican left in the same district when the state lost one of its six seats.

Following the court's directive to make only the changes necessary to equalize the population of the five districts, a special master has produced a map barely changed from the old one.

"This court gave clear, unequivocal, very precise directives to the special master on how to prepare a reapportionment plan," said Aaron Bayer, a lawyer for Democrats on the commission. "The special master followed those directives meticulously and produced a plan that complies in every respect with this court's order. The court

should adopt the plan that the special master has recommended."

Proloy K. Das, a lawyer representing Republicans, argued that the court was incorrect in the deference given to the 2002 map, the last one produced by the legislature's bipartisan Reapportionment Commission.

Such deference is required when a court is considering a challenge to a map produced by the commission, but not when the commission deadlocks as it did after the 2010 and 2020 censuses, Das said.

The Connecticut Constitution gives responsibility for redistricting to the court when the Reapportionment Commission fails to produce a plan. It is silent on what criteria the court should follow.

"The exact words are 'establish a plan of redistricting.' And it's in that capacity this court must draw the best and fairest map for our electorate," Das said. "And it's the only way we can fix the current gerrymandered lobster claw that defines our present map."

Das said the status quo favors Democrats, and they never will agree to a more compact map if they know an impasse will shift the task to a court forever committed to doing nothing more than minimal changes.

"The parties will never reach an agreement," Das said. "We'll reach gridlock, and we'll be back here, because the party that's advantaged, a party that has a map that produces 5-0 in favor of one party, has no incentive to change."

Bayer acknowledged that the constitution clearly grants broad authority to the court once the commission deadlocks.

"But it doesn't direct this court to step in and replicate the political process," Bayer said. "It doesn't direct this court to use traditional redistricting principles to start from scratch and remake the map, move hundreds of thousands of voters into new districts."

Das drew inspiration from an unlikely source. Addressing a court wholly appointed by two Democratic governors, Das quoted one of the U.S. Supreme Court's liberal justices, Elena Kagan, from her withering dissent in a gerrymandering decision delivered in 2019:

"These gerrymanders enabled politicians to entrench themselves in office as against voters' preferences. They promoted partisanship above respect for the popular will. They encouraged a politics of polarization and dysfunction. If left unchecked, gerrymanders like the ones here may irreparably damage our system of government."

But he also noted that the 5-4 majority in the case, *Rucho v. Common Cause*, the U.S. Supreme Court held that federal courts lack jurisdiction to adjudicate claims of political gerrymandering, but it was up to state courts to address them based on their constitutions.

"The remedy lies in state courts," Das said. Connecticut's map must be redrawn because it produces only Democratic victo-

ries, even though Republican candidates garner as much as 47% of the total vote, Das said.

Bayer said that thinking was flawed.

The map produced Republican victories in three of the five districts in the 2002 and 2004 elections, and the Republican candidate for governor carried the 2nd and 5th districts in 2018.

"That has to do with candidates," Bayer said. "That bespeaks competitive districts, not uncompetitive districts."

The U.S. Supreme Court case Das cited was about partisan gerrymandering, the product of maps produced in states where the dominant party could tilt the map. Bayer said that was not relevant in Connecticut, where the process is bipartisan.

The map now opposed by Republicans was a political compromise, drawn to establish a competitive district where two incumbents from opposite parties could have a fair fight.

Bayer conceded the resulting map isn't pretty.

"It doesn't mean it's illegitimate. It means that that is how political compromise happens," Bayer said. "It's not always clean and neat. It's often messy."

The justices sat silently during the arguments. The only comment from the bench came at the end.

"Thank you, counsel," Chief Justice Richard A. Robinson said. "This argument was very helpful, appreciate it."

REVIEW

Despite no-frills set, fiery performance of ‘What the Constitution Means to Me’ ideal for The Bushnell

By Christopher Arnott  
Hartford Courant

At first glance, Heidi Schreck's "What the Constitution Means to Me" seems like an odd, out-of-proportion programming choice for the Bushnell Broadway series, the most sparse and laid-back tour since the two-person, no-set, table-bound, script-in-hand play "Love Letters" played there in 2016.

"What the Constitution Means to Me" mainly has one person in it, who is mainly giving a prepared debate speech. In all previous versions of the show, that person was Schreck herself, who first wrote and performed a variation of this autobiographical piece a decade ago. The tour's star is Cassie Beck, who appeared in Schreck's play "The Consultant" at New Haven's Long Wharf Theatre seven years ago and brings the same friendly, funny, vaguely sassy appeal to this show. Beck is actually playing Schreck, until toward the show's end she announces that she is really Cassie Beck, as whom she will engage in a live debate with an actual teenage debate specialist.

So far that sounds like talking, talking and talking about talking.

There's a set design, but it's a purposely nondescript old American Legion hall, with more than 150 photos of veterans adorning a back wall of a meeting hall furnished with cheap chairs and a podium.

When a change in lighting is required, or a taped recording needs to be played, the star directly addresses the show's stage manager, whose name we learn is Nicole. In its writing and in its presentation, "What the Constitution Means to Me" aspires to be as down-to-earth as possible.

For a Bushnell Broadway show (coming a few months after "Escape to Margaritaville," with "My Fair Lady" up next), this is a true anomaly. There's not even a merchandise table out in the lobby, though all attendees do get to leave the show with a small souvenir: a free pocket-sized copy of the Constitution of the United States, provided by the ACLU.

So, few frills, and may seem like school more than playtime. Yet "What the Constitution Means to Me" is a feisty, fiery and very theatrical display of ideas, idealism, feminism, love, honor, anger, sadness, life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

Its power and grandiosity come not from a fancy design or a big singing dancing chorus but from the human spirit, and from centuries of American democracy.

Remember the other kind of show that works so well in The Bushnell's main Mortensen Hall: the Connecticut Forum discussions, where great minds tackle weighty subjects. Compared to those forums, "What the Constitution Means to Me" has at least as many chairs and at least as many major topics to discuss:

Abortion. Violence against women. Injustice. Racism. Sexism. Citizenship. Schreck, now with Beck as her avatar, scrolls through these and other issues in a variety of attitudes and styles. There's the scholarly approaches, quoting Constitutional amendments by heart. There's the confessional approach, lamenting how small changes in official wording or courtroom discussion could've bettered the lives of millions. There's glorying in the positive wonders of government, something that feels pretty good to share with others in well-populated theater.

"What the Constitution Means to Me" is generally a small, delicate, listen-in-close piece about democracy, independence, social values and how those things can affect what we believe and how we grow up. Those bits can make you go quiet, even tear up a bit.

But Schreck also makes sure she dramatizes her youthful love for the Constitution, some of the wild imaginings of her childhood and some of the interesting career choices of her ancestors. Her grandmother was a log roller, a skill which is demonstrated hilariously through full-body sweeping gestures that bring Beck back and



Cassie Beck evokes a 15-year-old Heidi Schreck in debating mode in the national tour of "What the Constitution Means to Me" at The Bushnell. **JOAN MARCUS/COURTESY**

Show information

"What the Constitution Means to Me" by Heidi Schreck, starring Cassie Beck, runs Jan. 26-30 at The Bushnell, 166 Capitol Ave., Hartford. \$32-\$99. bushnell.org.

forth across the stage several times.

The piece switches from quasi-reality to theatrical on a dime. Fourth walls are broken. Shows exist within shows within shows. The most realistic seeming moments turn out to be pivotal structural elements in a meticulously constructed yet endlessly unpredictable stage show.

A male character who sits idly at the side of the stage for most of the performance eventually gives up the pretense altogether and reveals himself to be Gabriel Marin, an actor who shares some of his own "personal" (scripted) childhood memories and

Marin is an invaluable player in what is otherwise Beck/Schreck's show. He's a mysterious, benign and comforting presence, and by being so subdued and off-to-the-side he stands out. He gets a few laughs of his own. He represents compassionate men as well as stereotypical middle-aged men and centuries of patriarchal rule, just by sitting them. Like Beck, he brings a different vibe than the actor who did the Broadway run, Mike Iveson, who brought a goofiness to it.

Those who've seen Schreck perform "What the Constitution Means to Me" herself, whether off Broadway or on Broadway or in the filmed version of the stage show now airing on Amazon Prime should be intrigued by what Cassie Beck brings to the role. Beck gets some laughs where Schreck didn't, emphasizes some points that Schreck said more matter-of-factly and

otherwise plays variations on the themes of Schreck's own life and words. Yet she seems as natural in the role as Schreck did. You believe that woman onstage had these experiences. You believe that she is telling them to you informally. You believe that she is an expert debater. You trust her, and you appreciate her passion, and you continue to ponder what she said as you leave the theater clutching your pocket-sized Constitution.

The show seems eternally timely. It moved from being an off Broadway sensation to Broadway a couple years ago because Schreck's lifelong fondness for the U.S. Constitution provided an impassioned response when it seemed like that historic document was being besmirched during the presidential election. The play's main theme is women's rights, and it notes recent challenges to *Roe v. Wade* as well as the Constitution's lack of specific language which could have helped protect women from slavery, domestic abuse and second-class status

Wednesday's performance at The Bushnell happened on the night that news broke of U.S. Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer's retirement, paving the way for President Biden to nominate a Black woman (as he's promised) for a seat on the court.

"What the Constitution Means to Me" puts the news in context. It honors oratory and meticulous legal writing, but also personal confessions and raw emotions. It's also a heck of a show, with twists and turns and pathos and grand speeches, with a heroine you won't forget. Something else you won't forget: What the Constitution means to her.

Christopher Arnott can be reached at [carnott@courant.com](mailto:carnett@courant.com).

Appeals court says Wesleyan not liable for abuse of teens

Associated Press

Connecticut's Appellate Court ruled Friday that Wesleyan University cannot be held responsible for the alleged abuse of boys in its basketball facilities and the dorm room of a basketball player during the early 1980s.

The decision, which upholds the ruling of a lower court, found the two men who brought a lawsuit against the school in 2017 failed to show the school should have known what allegedly happened to them and other boys between 1982 and 1984, when they were between 13 and 15 years old.

The lawsuit alleges the student, who the plaintiffs say also was a resident adviser at Wesleyan, met boys at the school's basketball facility, then brought them to his room promising to show them "exercise and stretching routines" before sexually abusing them.

The court found the plaintiffs "have provided no evidence, nor have they alleged any facts, that the defendant even knew that (the student) was in contact with younger teenage boys, particularly in his capacity as a resident advisor or head resident."

The lawsuit against the former student, who does not face any criminal charges, is still ongoing. The plaintiffs' attorney, Eamon Donovan, said they have not decided whether to appeal Friday's decision to the state Supreme Court.

A spokesperson for the university did not immediately reply to a request for comment. In earlier court filings, the school has said the student was not employed by Wesleyan and his alleged actions were not foreseeable.

Bridgeport cop found justified in shooting of suspect

Associated Press

A Bridgeport police officer was justified in the non-fatal shooting of a man who was stabbing another person in 2020, the state inspector general ruled Friday.

Officer Eliud Henry tried verbal commands and used his stun gun on the man, but they had no effect before Henry fired a single shot that struck the suspect on the right side of his torso, according to the report by Inspector General Robert Devlin Jr. The shooting was recorded by police body cameras.

The man, Juan Villa, then 27, survived and was charged with attempted murder, home invasion and other crimes. Villa has pleaded not guilty and remains detained on \$250,000 bail. A message seeking comment was left with his lawyer Friday.

The other man who police say was stabbed by Villa also survived. He told police Villa kicked in his room door in the multi-family home in the early-morning hours of Sept. 16 and began stabbing him with a piece of glass.

Villa left and the man went to a bathroom to check his wounds, he said. Villa then returned with a butcher's knife and began attacking him again, he told police. Officers were called to the home on a report that Villa was breaking things and appeared to be having mental health problems. It's not clear why Villa attacked the man.

"The investigation establishes that Officer Henry used deadly force against Juan Villa to stop Villa's active knife attack," Devlin wrote in his report. "I therefore conclude that such use of force was justified under Connecticut law."



LIVING

CELEBRITIES

Cops: Man crashes into Swift’s building

From news services

A Virginia man has been arrested for drunkenly crashing a car into Taylor Swift’s New York City apartment building and trying to gain entry, police said.

Morgan Mank, 31, was arrested shortly after 3 a.m. Thursday after driving the wrong way on Franklin Street in the Tribeca neighborhood, where Swift owns a townhouse and several apartments in an adjacent building, a police spokesperson said.

Police said Mank crashed into one of the buildings and tried unsuccessfully to gain entry. The spokesperson could not confirm reports that Mank told officers he wouldn’t leave until he met with Swift.

Mank tweeted “cya” at the star two days before the incident. “Wish you all the best. Cya @taylorswift13,” he posted on Tuesday. He subsequently wrote that the singer is “insane.”

Mank was taken to a hospital for an evaluation and later arrested on charges of driving while intoxicated and driving while ability impaired.

Swift, a multiple Grammy winner with a fervent fan base, has been plagued by stalkers at her Tribeca home as well as homes she owns in California and Rhode Island.

**Exotic resented to 21 years in prison:** A federal judge resented “Tiger King” Joe Exotic to 21 years in prison on Friday, reducing his punishment by just a year despite pleas from the former zookeeper for leniency as he begins treatment for cancer.

“Please don’t make me die in prison waiting for a chance to be free,” he told a federal judge who resented him on a murder-for-hire charge.

Joe Exotic — whose real



Taylor Swift is seen Nov. 12 in New York. A man drove into her apartment building Thursday. EVAN AGOSTINI/INVISION 2021

name is Joseph Maldonado-Passage — was convicted in a case involving animal welfare activist Carole Baskin. Both were featured in Netflix’s “Tiger King: Murder, Mayhem and Madness.”

Baskin and her husband also attended the proceedings, and she said she was fearful that Maldonado-Passage could threaten her.

Supporters packed the courtroom, some wearing animal-print masks and shirts that read “Free Joe Exotic.” His attorneys said they would appeal the resentencing and petition for a new trial.

**Ye sets release date for ‘Donda 2’:** Ye — the rap mogul formerly known as Kanye West — took to Instagram on Thursday to announce that “Donda 2,” the follow-up to his 2021 album, will arrive on Feb. 22 — or 2.22.22, as he put it.

Whether “Donda 2”

will actually drop next month remains to be seen. Ye is infamous for missing his release dates as he continues to tinker on projects, including 2016’s “The Life of Pablo.” The release of “Donda,” named after his late mother, was teased, announced and then delayed multiple times, while three listening parties came and went before the album finally dropped last August.

“Donda” ended up scoring multiple Grammy nominations, including album of the year.

**Jan. 29 birthdays:** Actor Katharine Ross is 82. Actor Tom Selleck is 77. Drummer Louie Perez is 69. TV host Oprah Winfrey is 68. Actor Judy Norton is 64. Actor Nicholas Turturro is 60. Actor Sharif Atkins is 47. Actor Sara Gilbert is 47. Actor Justin Hartley is 45. Guitarist Jonny Lang is 41. Singer Adam Lambert is 40.

MUSIC

Mellencamp plumbs regret and mortality on 25th album

By Mark Kennedy  
Associated Press

There’s a brutal calculus that goes on in John Mellencamp’s mind these days. Time is not on his side, and he knows it.

“I am 70. I’ve been smoking since I was 14. If I make it to 80, I only have 10 summers left,” he says. “I have 10 empty pages to fill in if I’m lucky.”

That dark thought process — an honest reckoning, not a plea for anything — runs through his latest album, “Strictly a One-Eyed Jack,” a terrific 12-song roots-rock collection that explores aging, mortality and regret.

“How can a man watch his life go down the drain?/ How many moments has he lost today?” the heartland rocker sings raspy on “Wasted Days,” one of three tunes featuring Bruce Springsteen.

Andy York — a frequent collaborator who provided acoustic and electric guitar, fretless bass, banjo, autoharp and his voice to the album — says few artists would begin a song with the line “How many summers still remain?” as Mellencamp does on “Wasted Days.”

“Not many people would sing a song starting with that line. But I think it’s important. It’s important to be sung because, ultimately, your takeaway from that song is you need to squeeze every bit of happiness and life out of every day and not waste days.”

It is Mellencamp’s 25th album, and it’s filled with world-weary truths, like the opening song “I Always Lie to Strangers.” Other songs include “Driving in the Rain,” a euphemism his grandfather used to warn a young Mellencamp when he was living dangerously,



‘Strictly a One-Eyed Jack’  
John Mellencamp  
(Republic Records)

“Sweet Honey Brown,” a song about a life wasted by heroin, and “Chasing Rainbows,” which is advice to recognize your blessings.

“If I laugh out loud once a day, I’ve had a good day,” the singer-songwriter says. “As you get older, you realize that you really don’t know much of anything. I know that sounds cliched, but it’s true.”

“Strictly a One-Eyed Jack” — with a cover painted by his son Speck — may be a Mellencamp album, but he’s mysterious about where the songs come from. A voice in his head tells him to write them down, he says.

“They just are sent to me, and I am an open vessel,” he says. “This album really is one guy speaking about himself and his life. And it ain’t me, but it’s observations, and it’s gone through my filter.”

Many of the pool of 30 songs that were edited down to a dozen were written before the pandemic, but some were inspired by it, like “Driving in the Rain.” They come quickly to him these days.

Mellencamp — whose past hits include “Jack and Diane,” “Pink Houses” and “Hurts So Good” — doesn’t labor over songs like he used to.

“When I was younger, I used to try to control my songs,” he says. “I don’t do

that much anymore. I just let the song go where it wants to go and say what it wants to say.”

Lyrics come first generally, and he jots them down with paper and pen. Sometimes he is stunned by what comes out: “To be real honest with you, some of these lyrics are so much smarter than me.”

“I think it’s just because I’m open. You know what I mean? When I was a kid, I wasn’t open. But now, as an old man, I am,” he adds. “I know that sounds like hocus pocus, but it’s true.”

The album and title song are named after playing cards. Both the jack of spades and jack of hearts are facing sideways and are nicknamed one-eyed jacks since only one eye is visible. Mellencamp notes that they have swords behind their backs and calls them the most dangerous cards in the deck. They act as metaphors for the way we are.

“We only show what we want people to see, and we really never get to know anybody because not only are we doing that, everybody’s playing that game,” he says. “So the bottom line is that we go through this life that we don’t really know anybody, do we?”

It’s a bleak assessment from a songwriter who has never pulled his punches. After all, one of his hits a lifetime ago goes “Life goes on, long after the thrill of living is gone.”

York, who says he thinks the new album is one of Mellencamp’s best, adds that each song is almost like a minifilm capturing a real life gone wrong.

“I look at it as a man in his journey of life, looking back on everything that he’s done, and the status of the world as it is now and just kind of shining a light on it, warts and all.”



ASK AMY

By Amy Dickinson  
askamy@amydickinson.com Twitter@askingamy

Dog lovers bring ‘fur’ babies to holiday meal

**Dear Amy:** We are starting to have trouble with family members who are dog-lovers.

This Christmas we were asked to host the family gathering. As we have only elderly cats in our home, we asked family members to leave their dogs at home, find accommodation for their dogs or perhaps host Christmas themselves. We do not have a fenced yard, nor any facility to host their dogs.

People brought their dogs, anyway.

We were told that we had to fence in our yard before next year to accommodate dogs that we don’t have.

Some insisted that we should confine our cats to a bedroom so that these family members could bring their dogs inside.

One dog always jumps up on people, and we have disabled and elderly members of the family who can’t withstand having a larger dog jump up on them.

One of these family members is recovering from a compound fracture, which occurred as a result of one of the dogs jumping on them.

Owning a dog is their choice and comes with responsibility that perhaps they may have to find a pet sitter for one or two days if the place they are traveling to cannot accommodate their animals.

Or they could host the holiday, themselves!

I arrange for pet care for our cats when we are out of town and don’t force them on other family members. I ask for the same consideration in return.

Your thoughts?  
— Family Member

**Dear Family Member:** Before I had a dog, I was assured that I would see my own dog as a “fur baby,” and as a sort of child substitute.

Then I got a dog. And nope — this beloved animal is not my baby.

Yes, this dog is definitely a member of the family (as my many cats have been), but good and responsible parenting — of the human or canine kind — requires that you occasionally find good outside care, because your baby (human or “fur”) can’t go everywhere with you. And if you can’t find care, you may have to stay home.

You have the right to ask family members not to bring their dogs to your holiday party, and they should respect this understandable request.

When they host family gatherings, you will find care for your feline family members and put up with their dogs, but it looks like you’re off the hook for hosting next year.

**Dear Amy:** Our kids gave us a “family” trip for Christmas, including children and grandchildren.

My sister, who is a widow, was with us at Christmas and invited herself along.

I have no desire to have her along, and find it presumptuous of her to invite herself, but now I’m the jerk because I said “no” quite sharply at Christmas.

She kept nagging about it, and my kids said there would be room. I said “no” — it was intended for our family, not including her.

She is diabetic and almost blind, so yes — she is needy. Am I wrong to

feel this way?  
— Scolded Sister

**Dear Scolded:** You are not “wrong” to feel the way you feel, but — from your own account, you reacted and behaved badly. Are you proud of your own actions on Christmas Day?

You should apologize to everyone for the way you reacted. You should especially apologize to your sister.

Tell her, “I hope you understand that I want to experience this special trip with my kids and grandchildren, but I should not have reacted the way I did, and I’m sorry.”

You should communicate with your kids about this, and if they decide not to include their aunt, it would be kind of you to offer her an alternative.

**Dear Amy:** “Family Man” wrote to you about how to cope with his perennially cheating wife, and you — oh so sage — suggest an open marriage?

This man is obviously traditional and does not want that! You need to retract this terrible advice.  
— Upset

**Dear Upset:** I did not suggest that “Family Man” should enter into an open marriage. Because his wife refused to change, I outlined his options: Accept this as an open relationship or leave the marriage.

I doubt that an open marriage would be tenable for him.

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HOROSCOPES

Tarot.com

**Aries (March 21-April 19):** Clarity on a matter that has been holding you back could finally be coming. You may need to acknowledge that getting the progress you crave will require you to move past the comfort zone of your current knowledge.

**Taurus (April 20-May 20):** You may be excited to learn about another culture at the moment, but you could discover that you like the idea of leaving your comfort zone more than the actual experience of it. You don’t have to be ashamed of whatever your honest feelings are, but you may need to decide what to do next.

**Gemini (May 21-June 20):** An investment you may have been watching for a while could take off today. Try to keep your big picture in mind. You might need to balance the uncertain prospect of increasing your income against your known obligations like paying off debt. Take some action toward both ends.

**Cancer (June 21-July 22):** Starting a new partnership could be exciting for you now. Though it may be tremendously validating to feel like someone really understands you, watch out for potentially moving — or trying to move — too fast. Give them space to share in their own way instead.

**Leo (July 23-Aug. 22):** Beautifying your surroundings could be incredibly compelling today. You may, however, need to make an effort to know when to stop. Even if you can envision exactly what you’d do with a space, you might not be ready to get rid of the possessions that currently fill it.

**Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22):** Pursue your own pleasure right now. While you might think it’s out of character for you to be this self-focused, maybe the bigger change is actually your awareness of your desires. Fortunately, your potential fear that doing what you want will somehow hurt others doesn’t have to be reality.

**Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 22):** Building your desired home life may be possible at this time. Trying to make even small or necessary changes could trigger conflict. They may fear that what you are proposing will take away their current security and leave them without anything to replace it.

**Scorpio (Oct. 23-Nov. 21):** Misunderstandings may be easy to come by at the moment. You don’t think through the way your words sound to others. Hearing from someone could be the wake-up call you need to correct your course! You probably have more time to fix things than you think you do.

**In 1936**, the first inductees of baseball’s Hall of Fame, including Ty Cobb and Babe Ruth, were named in Cooperstown, New York.

**In 1963**, poet Robert Frost died in Boston at age 88.

**In 1964**, Stanley Kubrick’s nuclear war satire “Dr. Strangelove Or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb” premiered.

**In 1929**, The Seeing Eye, a school which trains guide dogs to assist the blind, was incorporated.

**Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21):** Paying attention to your finances is especially important right now. Your longing for security may tempt you to do something impulsive. If you can be a little more patient, thinking about what’s important to you can help you come up with a strategy to secure your top priorities.

**Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19):** Impatience with others who don’t agree with you could strike you today, but you might need to be realistic about the limits of your control. What’s best for you personally? You might have to settle for leading by example. Fortunately, your example could look even better than usual!

**Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18):** Letting a new connection develop outside of the public’s view could make sense to you now. You might want to get to know each other before you let the world know you are an item. However, the greatest threat to your privacy could be your own tendency to talk.

**Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20):** Drama could erupt in your friend group at this time. Before you try to decide which side to take, look at whether or not the people involved feel connected to each other in any positive ways. Conflict may appeal to people if the only alternative appears to be an absence of emotion.

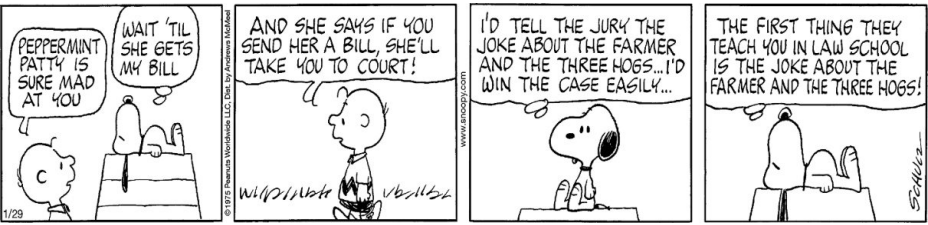
**In 1995**, the San Francisco 49ers became the first team in NFL history to win five Super Bowl titles.

**In 2002**, President George W. Bush said terrorists were still threatening America and warned of “an axis of evil.”

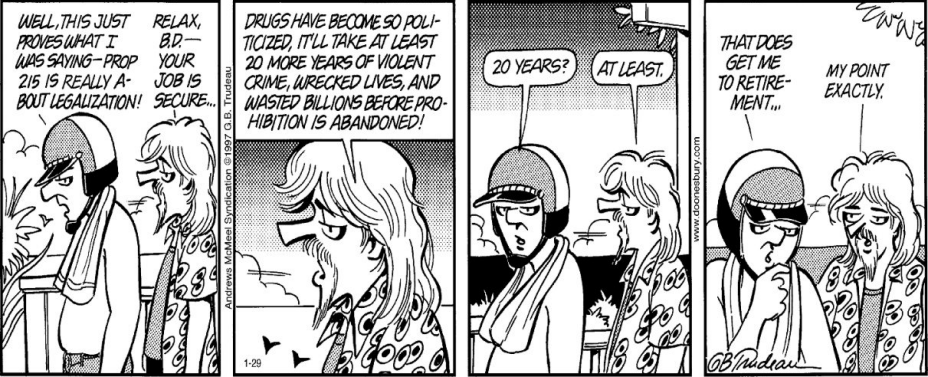
**In 2012**, eleven people were killed when fog caused a series of fiery crashes on I-75 in Florida.



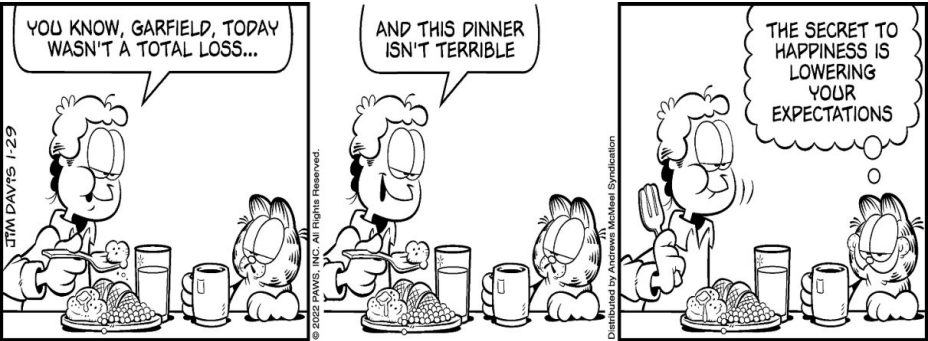
Peanuts By Charles M. Schulz



Classic Doonesbury By Garry Trudeau



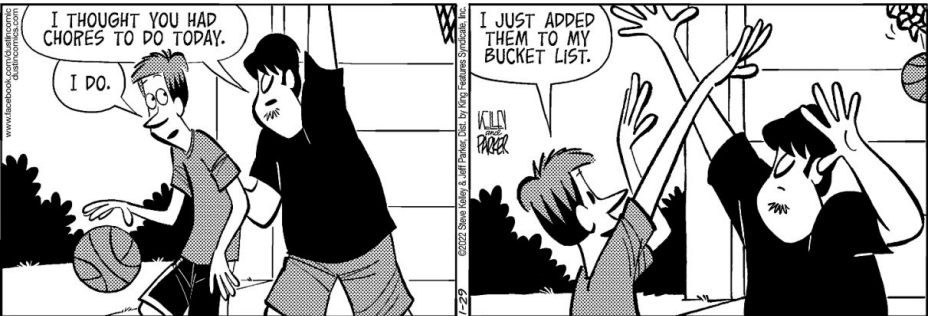
Garfield By Jim Davis



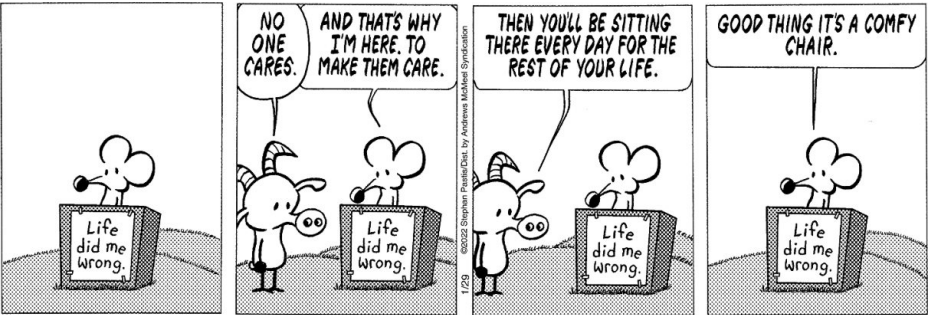
Shoe By Gary Brookins & Susie MacNelly



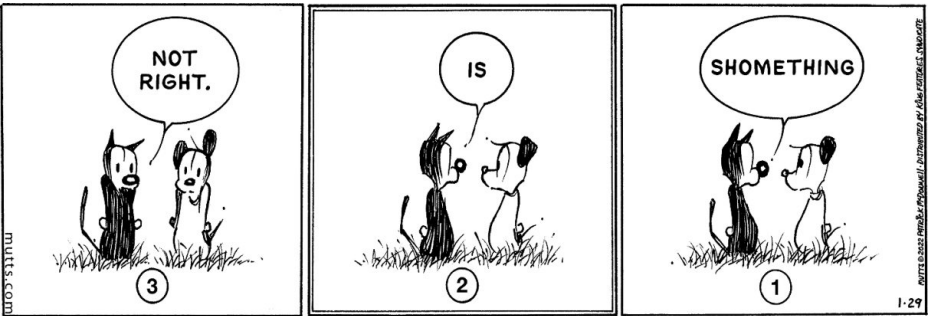
Dustin By Steve Kelley & Jeff Parker



Pearls Before Swine By Stephan Pastis



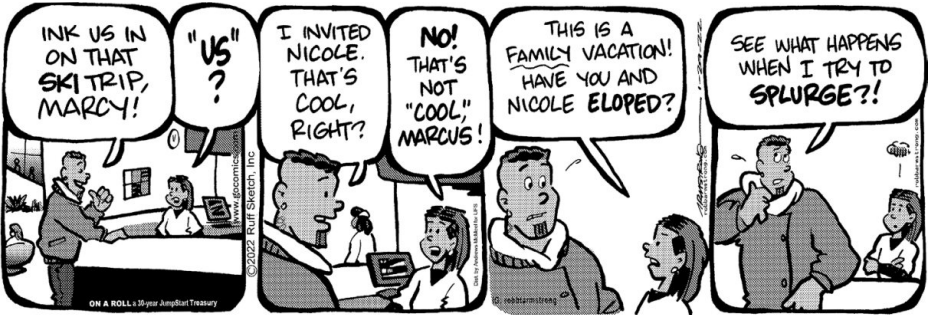
Mutts By Patrick McDonnell



Arctic Circle By Alex Hallatt



Jump Start By Robb Armstrong



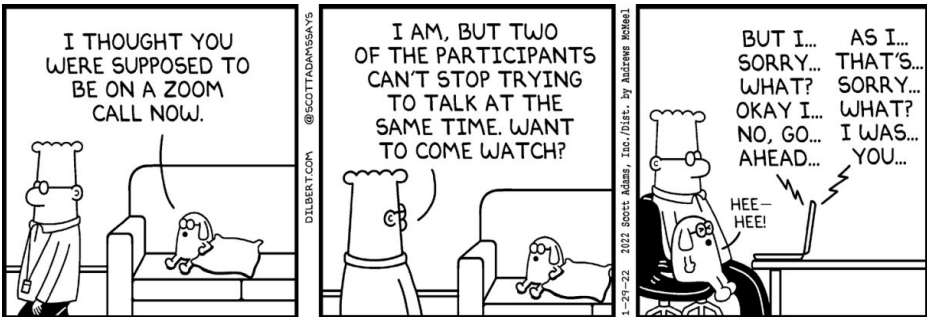
Get Fuzzy By Darby Conley



Blondie By Dean Young and John Marshall



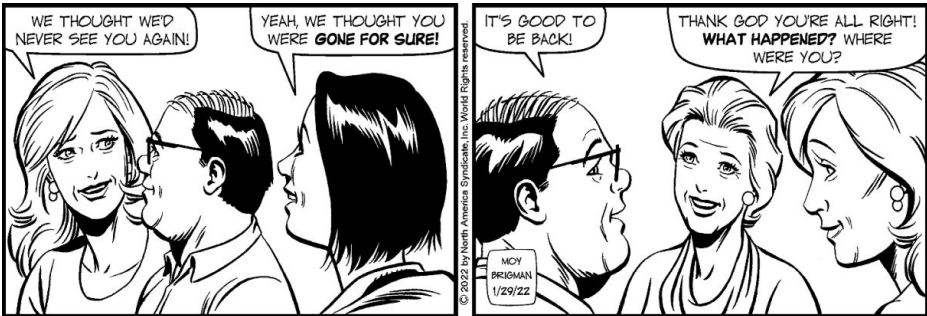
Dilbert By Scott Adams



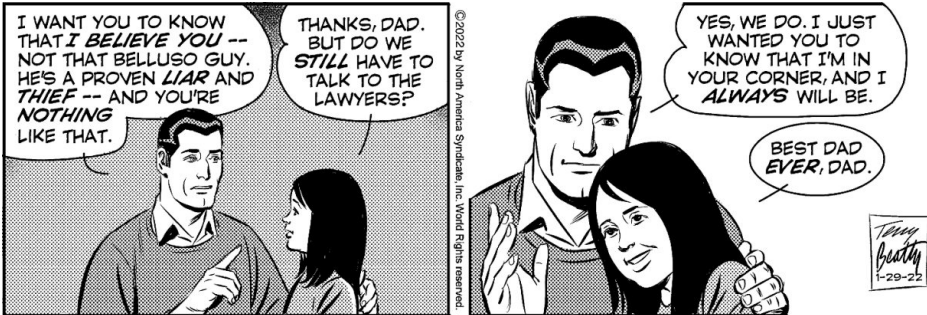
Gil Thorp By Neal Rubin and Frank McLaughlin



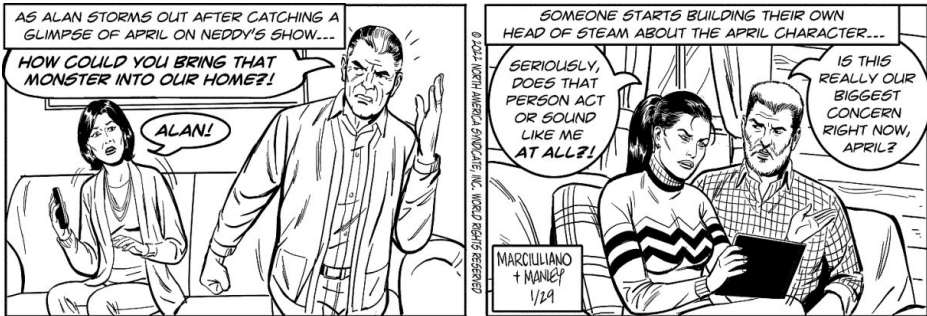
Mary Worth By Karen Moy and June Brigman



Rex Morgan, M.D. By Terry Beatty



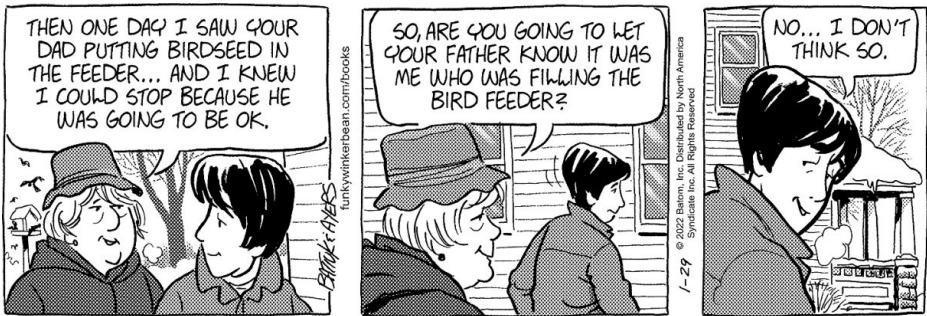
Judge Parker By Woody Wilson and Mike Manley



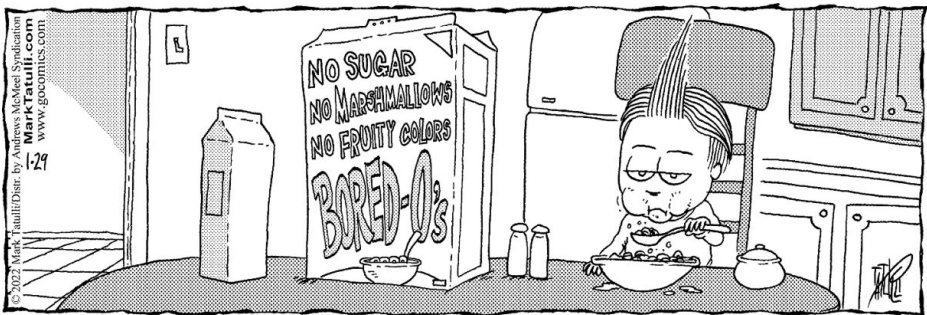
Baldo By Cantu and Castellanos



Funky Winkerbean By Tom Batiuk



Lio By Mark Tatulli



Wizard Of Id By Johnny Hart and Brant Parker



Rhymes With Orange By Hilary Price

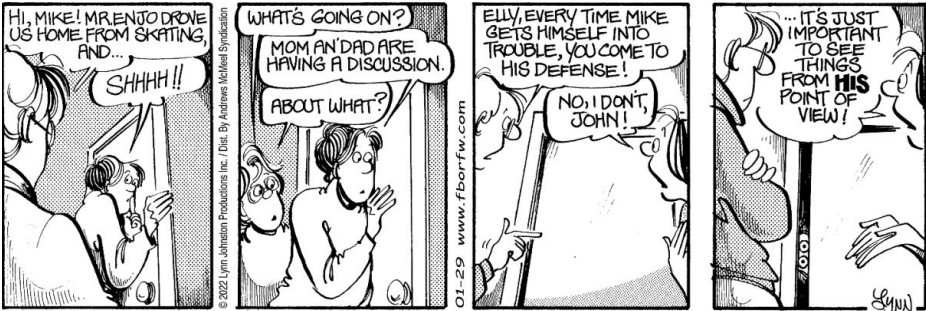


Monty By Jim Meddick

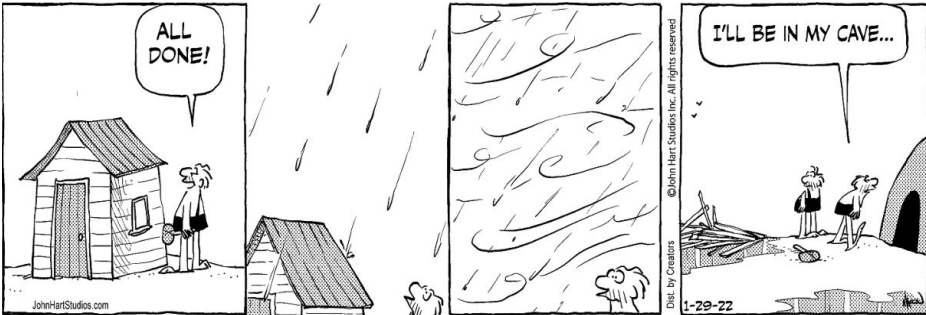




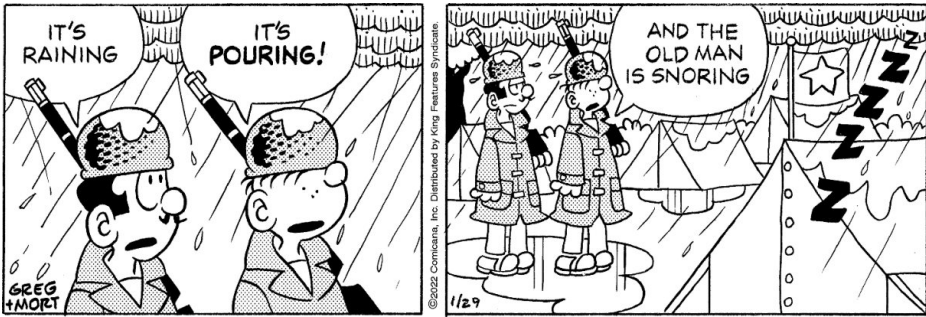
For Better Or For Worse By Lynn Johnston



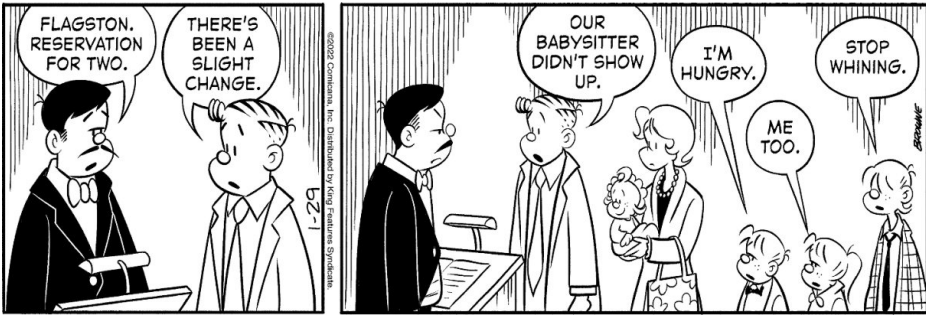
B.C. By Hart



Beetle Bailey by Mort, Greg & Brian Walker



Hi & Lois By Greg and Brian Walker and Chance Brown



Hagar The Horrible By Chris Browne



Non Sequitur By Wiley Miller



Curtis By Ray Billingsley



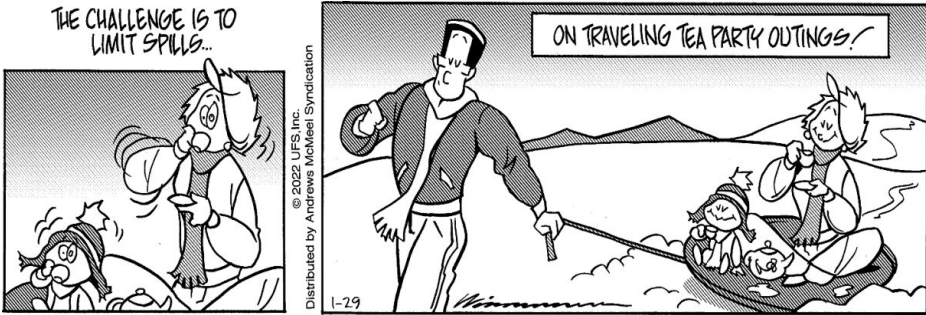
Pickles By Brian Crane



Zits By Jerry Scott and Jim Borgman



Rose Is Rose By Pat Brady and Don Wimmer



Mother Goose And Grimm By Mike Peters



CROSSWORD

EDITED BY RICH NORRIS AND JOYCE NICHOLS LEWIS

Across

- 1 Biography beginning?
- 5 Energy
- 8 It may be fictional
- 13 Works on walls
- 15 Where "Madama Butterfly" premiered
- 16 What spies often do
- 17 Works on walls
- 19 Cereal bit
- 20 Prisoner's place, in an 1894 adventure novel
- 22 Most coins have them
- 23 Make sharp
- 25 2004 World Golf Hall of Fame inductee Isao \_\_
- 27 Titled woman
- 28 Radiation Protection Program org.
- 31 Las Palmas lad
- 33 Badger
- 34 Celebrity's arrival, perhaps
- 37 In the negative, unlikely to be fooled
- 38 Bet, in a way
- 39 "Alley \_\_"
- 40 Works on, as a lawn
- 41 Five mL, in medicine
- 42 Is beholden to
- 44 \_\_ sauce
- 46 Oodles
- 50 Musical skill

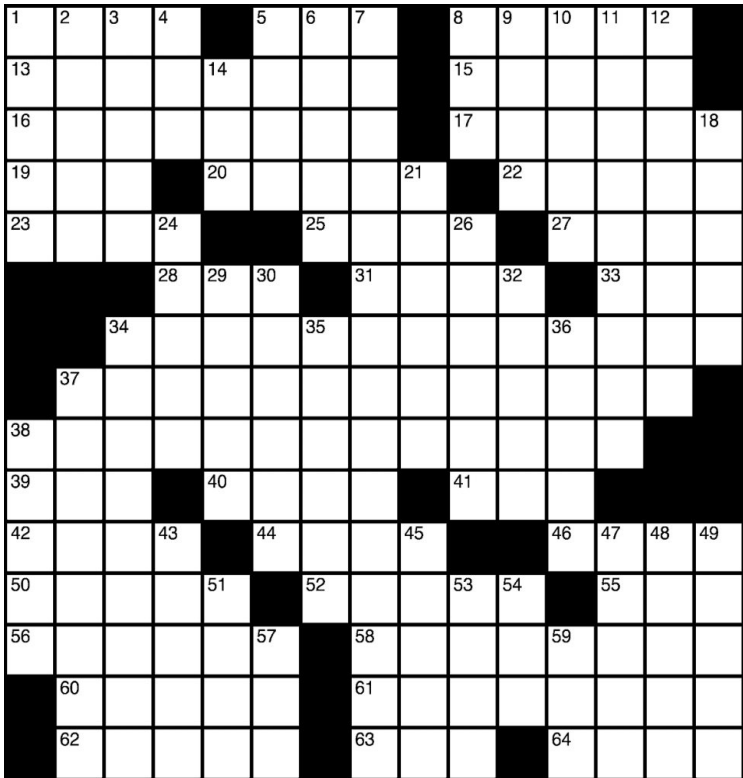
- 52 Sign up, in Salisbury
- 55 Zilch
- 56 Wanting success?
- 58 Assign responsibility
- 60 Summary
- 61 Serious predicament
- 62 Wine residue
- 63 Modern marshal's milieu
- 64 Text translation

- 5 Wisteria, e.g.
- 6 Memoir that led to the movie "What's Love Got to Do With It"
- 7 Act mannerly
- 8 Music box, maybe
- 9 Yarn spinner
- 10 Homeric epic
- 11 Versatile head-neck garb
- 12 Getting very close
- 14 Tasseled hat
- 18 Extended attack
- 21 Like
- 24 Looped fabric
- 26 Strongly focused
- 29 What a hot dog does?
- 30 "But I digress ..."

- 32 Root in perfumery
- 34 Wig out about
- 35 Clinton press secretary Myers
- 36 Crackerjack
- 37 Windbag
- 38 Dog
- 43 Food flavoring
- 45 "Smallville" actress Kristin
- 47 Studio sign
- 48 Explosive, briefly
- 49 Letter carrier's challenge
- 51 Catch-22
- 53 Skin care brand
- 54 Relay part
- 57 Family docs
- 59 Clock-setting std.

Down

- 1 Radiant
- 2 First name in a Dickens classic
- 3 Preference
- 4 "For the apparel \_\_ proclaims the man": Polonius



By Brian E. Paquin

Tribune Content Agency 1/29/22

BRIDGE

BY STEVE BECKER

North dealer.

Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH

♠ A K Q 7 6 5  
♥ 9  
♦ 5  
♣ A 6 5 4 3

WEST

♠ J 10 9 8 3  
♥ A Q 3  
♦ J 6  
♣ 10 7 2

EAST

♠ 4 2  
♥ 5  
♦ Q 9 8 7 4  
♣ K Q J 9 8

SOUTH

♠ —  
♥ K J 10 8 7 6 4 2  
♦ A K 10 3 2  
♣ —

The bidding:

North East South West  
4 ♠ Pass 5 ♥ Dble

Opening lead — ace of hearts.

Thrust and counterthrust

There is no way of knowing for sure whether this deal, sent by a reader, really was bid and played the way it was described, or whether embellishments have been added.

However, the actual facts are not really that important, since the hand provides a good story — whether you choose to believe it or not.

South got to five hearts doubled on the bidding shown. Probably West doubled hoping to jockey North back into spades, but North very wisely passed. West led the ace of hearts, which proved to be an exceptionally good lead. Had he led a spade, a diamond or a club, South would have made the contract easily, losing just two trump tricks.

Declarer had the presence of mind to drop his four of hearts on the ace, a play that eventually proved to be crucial. West

then shifted to the jack of diamonds, again choosing the best line of defense.

South won with the ace and led the king of hearts. Once again, realizing what might happen to him if he followed low, West made an excellent play by dropping his queen under the king in order to avoid later being thrown on lead with a trump.

When East showed out, it was not difficult for declarer to diagnose the reason for West's extraordinary jettisoning of the trump queen. So South cashed his king of diamonds and exited with the deuce of hearts!

West had to win the trick with the three and had no choice but to return a spade or a club. This allowed South to dispose of his three diamond losers on dummy's high cards, so he ended up making five hearts doubled.

JUMBLE

BY DAVID HOYT AND JEFF KNUREK

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

RIHLW

LYURT

TANSAO

MRTIUA

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Ans. " " " "

here:

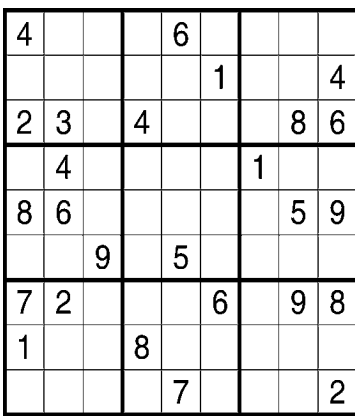
Yesterday's

Jumbles: LEAVE BATTY SHROUD ATTAIN

Answer: She correctly answered every question on her history exam, which her score — ATTESTED TO

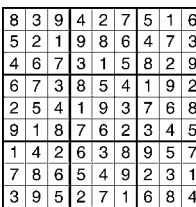


TODAY'S SUDOKU



Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-3 box (in bold borders) contains every digit, 1 to 9. For strategies on how to solve Sudoku, visit [www.sudoku.org.uk](http://www.sudoku.org.uk)

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE



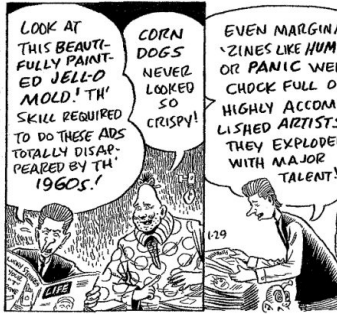
ANSWER TO PREVIOUS CROSSWORD PUZZLE



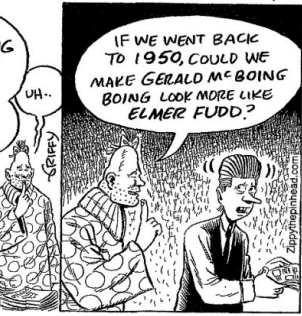
ZIPPY



"WHEN TOONS COLLIDE"



Bill Griffant





Motoring  
Inside

Hartford Courant

# SPORTS

COURANT.COM/SPORTS


UCONN MEN'S BASKETBALL

## Demons' nightmare

No. 20 Huskies hope to extend win streak over Big East rival DePaul

By Shreyas Laddha  
Hartford Courant

The UConn men's basketball team is starting to turn heads in the college basketball world. The No. 20 Huskies (14-4, 5-2 in Big East) are winners of their last four conference games and currently sit third in the Big East behind Providence and Villanova. They face DePaul (10-9, 1-8 Big East) on Saturday at Wintrust Arena and UConn has won its

Up next  
 UConn at DePaul  
6:30 p.m., FS1

last 10 matchups against the Blue Demons. As UConn continues to gain attention as the season rolls on, there have been a number of reasons for the success, but perhaps none greater than the team's ability to rebound. The Huskies rank fifth in NCAA Division I in total rebounds per game with 42.11. They rank fourth in offensive rebounds per game with 14.4. The number of times a

second-chance opportunity has come from an offensive rebound this season has been too many to count. When the Huskies' offense has struggled, second-chance opportunities have kept them in the game until the offense wakes up. Despite the exceptional team totals, not one Husky ranks among the top 50 in the current NCAA rebounding stats with Adama Sanogo (8.4 per game) checking in at No. 53. It speaks to the effort of the entire team, a point of pride for the Huskies according to coach Dan Hurley.

Turn to UConn, Page 4



Rebounding has become a strong suit for the UConn men's basketball team, and Adama Sanogo, averaging 8.4 per game, leads the way. CLOE POISSON/SPECIAL TO THE COURANT

BASEBALL

## A major move to the minors

New Britain native Mercado goes from coaching high school to managing in the pros, just like that

By Dom Amore  
Hartford Courant

Sometimes baseball players are drafted out of high school... but *managers*? It's unusual, but Roberto Mercado is making that jump. After 10 years as coach at New Britain High, Mercado was hired this week to lead the Aberdeen IronBirds, High Class A affiliate of the Baltimore Orioles. "I've kind of been preparing for this my entire life without even realizing it," said Mercado, 42, born and raised in New Britain and a graduate of its high school. "I've always been lifelong learner. I'm a sponge and all those experiences have prepared me. When I got a call from the Baltimore Orioles I was like, 'what the heck's going on here?' But I was super excited about it." At New Britain High, where he was also dean of students, Mercado led the Hurricanes to four conference or division titles, posting a 139-80 record across 10 years. "The Orioles made a great hire," UConn coach Jim Penders said. "He's a great baseball guy, but an even greater guy because he cares so deeply about his players and is a teacher first."

Mercado already considers himself a "baseball lifer. He has been spending his summers since 2014 coaching on the Cape Cod League, where he worked with several future major leaguers with the Yarmouth-Dennis Red Sox, and made an impression on college coaches and professional player-development people. He has embraced coaching opportunities wherever he could find them, as far as Australia and New Zealand in the Goodwill Series. "Once we had an opening, I called around to people I trust," said Matt Blood, the Orioles' director of player development. "And his name was given

Turn to Mercado, Page 2

RANGERS



Former Rangers goaltender Henrik Lundqvist, center, watches as his number is retired before a game between the Rangers and Wild on Friday in New York. JOHN MUNSON/AP

## THE KING'S CORONATION

Rangers retire Lundqvist's No. 30 in ceremony

By Vin Cherwoo  
Associated Press

NEW YORK — The King has taken his throne in the rafters at Madison Square Garden. Henrik Lundqvist became the 11th player to have his number retired by the New York Rangers when a banner with his name and No. 30 was raised at the Garden before the team's game against the Minnesota Wild on Friday night. The Swedish goalie spent his entire 15-year playing career with the Rangers after being selected in the seventh round of the 2000

NHL draft, finishing with a record of 459-310-96 with a 2.43 goals-against average and .918 save-percentage. After the 2019-20 season, he had the final year of his contract bought out by New York and signed with Washington for the ensuing shortened season but did not play after having heart surgery. The 39-year-old Lundqvist, a fan favorite in New York from the start of his stellar career, received an ovation and cheers of "Hen-rik! Hen-rik!" from the crowd when he was announced and walked out on the blue carpet on the ice, and then again when he was called to the

podium by Rangers broadcaster Sam Rosen. "When I look back at my 15 years here, what gives me the most satisfaction it's not the wins or the personal recognition but its really the commitment," Lundqvist said. "The commitment I felt to the New York Rangers and the commitment they showed me for so long." Lundqvist became third Rangers goalie to have his jersey retired, joining Ed Giacomin (1) and Mike Richter (35). Brian Leetch (2), Harry Howell (3), Rod Gilbert (7),

Turn to Lundqvist, Page 2

GIANTS

## Bills OC Daboll to be next New York head coach

By Pat Leonard  
New York Daily News

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. — The Giants are going all-Bills. Buffalo offensive coordinator Brian Daboll agreed to be the 20th head coach in franchise history on Friday night, following new Giants GM Joe Schoen from upstate New York to North Jersey. Schoen, the Bills' assistant GM the past five years, led a search that prioritized fixing a broken offense led by Daniel Jones and improving communication inside the building. Now Daboll, 46, the Giants' first of six candidates interviewed, is the pick to help the GM address both. Daboll guided Bills 2018 first-round pick Josh Allen from a promising raw quarterback into the dominant force the nation watched in last week's Divisional playoff loss to Kansas City. And Daboll's familiarity with Schoen from four years as colleagues, plus the fact he's a rookie head coach, "aligned" him best with Schoen's "plan and vision," a priority in the hire. "It is an honor and a privilege to be named head coach of the New York Giants," Daboll said in a statement released by the team. "My immediate goal is to assemble a coaching staff — a strong staff that emphasizes teaching and collaboration and making sure our players are put in the position to be their best and, ultimately, to win games." The Giants' decision went down to the wire and took an 11th-hour turn. Some of the Giants' primary decision makers believed earlier in the week that Daboll was taking the Miami Dolphins' job, where he was a leading candidate, as well, per sources. It was a "close call," one source said. Ex-Dolphins head coach Brian Flores was a strong candidate that co-owner John Mara personally contacted last

Turn to Giants, Page 4

Inside  
Patriots offensive coordinator Josh McDaniels expected to interview for Raiders' head-coaching job, per reports. Page 4



### Safety Tip of the Day

Remember, all maneuvers - accelerating, stopping, and turning - take longer and are less predictable when the pavement is covered with snow and ice.



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SPORTS

UP NEXT

**UConn MBB:** at DePaul, Saturday, 6:30 p.m.; Creighton (XL), Tuesday, 6:30 p.m.; at Villanova, Feb. 5, noon  
**UConn WBB:** at Providence, Sunday, 7:30 p.m.; at Creighton, Wednesday, 7:30 p.m.; Butler (Gampel), Friday, 7 p.m.  
**Celtics:** at Pelicans, Saturday, 7 p.m.; Heat, Monday, 7:30 p.m.; Hornets, Wednesday, 7:30 p.m.  
**Knicks:** Kings, Monday, 7:30 p.m.; Grizzlies, Wednesday, 7:30 p.m.; at Lakers, Feb. 5, 8:30 p.m.  
**Nets:** at Warriors, Saturday, 8:30 p.m.; at Suns, Tuesday, 10 p.m.; at Kings, Wednesday, 10 p.m.  
**UConn hockey:** vs. Yale (CT Collegiate Tourney), Saturday, 3:30 p.m.; vs. Quinnipiac/Sacred Heart (CT Collegiate Tourney), Sunday, time TBD; Providence, Friday, 7 p.m.  
**Bruins:** at Stars, Sunday, 7 p.m.; Kraken, Tuesday, 7 p.m.; Penguins, Feb. 8, 7 p.m.  
**Rangers:** Kraken, Sunday, 1 p.m.; Panthers, Tuesday, 7 p.m.; Bruins, Feb. 15, 7 p.m.  
**Wolf Pack:** Lehigh Valley, Saturday, 7 p.m.; at Hershey, Wednesday, 7 p.m.; at Springfield, Friday, 7 p.m.

TV/RADIO  
AUTO RACING

**11:30 a.m.:** Formula E- Round 2. (Live) CBSSN  
**1:30 p.m.:** IMSA Weathertech Sportscar Championship Rolex 24 at Daytona. (Live) NBC  
**4 p.m.:** IMSA Weathertech Sportscar Championship Rolex 24 at Daytona. (Same-day Tape) USA  
**10 p.m.:** IMSA Weathertech Sportscar Championship Rolex 24 at Daytona. (Live) USA  
**BASKETBALL**  
**12 p.m.:** Duke at Louisville. (Live) ESPN  
**12 p.m.:** LSU at TCU. (Live) ESPN2  
**12 p.m.:** Wichita State at Tulane. (Live) ESPNU  
**12 p.m.:** Georgetown at Butler. (Live) FS1  
**12 p.m.:** La Salle at Davidson. (Live) USA  
**12:30 p.m.:** Michigan at Michigan State. (Live) CBS  
**2 p.m.:** NC State at North Carolina. (Live) ACC  
**2 p.m.:** LIU at Bryant. (Live) CBSSN  
**2 p.m.:** Oklahoma at Auburn. (Live) ESPN  
**2 p.m.:** West Virginia at Arkansas. (Live) ESPN2  
**2 p.m.:** Missouri at Iowa State. (Live) ESPNU  
**2 p.m.:** Xavier at Creighton. (Live) FS1  
**2 p.m.:** Saint Joseph's at St. Bonaventure. (Live) USA  
**2:30 p.m.:** Arizona State at Arizona. (Live) CBS  
**2:30 p.m.:** Indiana at Maryland. (Live) FOX  
**3 p.m.:** Virginia Tech at Florida State. (Live) ABC  
**4 p.m.:** Pittsburgh at Boston College. (Live) ACC  
**4 p.m.:** VCU at Richmond. (Live) CBSSN  
**4 p.m.:** Baylor at Alabama. (Live) ESPN  
**4 p.m.:** Oklahoma State at Florida. (Live) ESPN2  
**4 p.m.:** Kansas State at Ole Miss. (Live) ESPNU  
**4:30 p.m.:** St. John's at Villanova. (Live) FOX  
**4:30 p.m.:** Marquette at Providence. (Live) FS1  
**6 p.m.:** Virginia at Notre Dame. (Live) ACC  
**6 p.m.:** Georgia at Vanderbilt. (Live) SEC  
**6 p.m.:** Furman at Mercer. (Live) CBSSN  
**6 p.m.:** Kentucky at Kansas. (Live) ESPN  
**6 p.m.:** Mississippi State at Texas Tech. (Live) ESPN2  
**6 p.m.:** Texas Southern at Prairie View A&M. (Live) ESPNU  
**6:30 p.m.:** UConn at DePaul. (Live), FS1  
**7 p.m.:** Boston Celtics at New Orleans Pelicans. (Live), NBCSB  
**8 p.m.:** Wake Forest at Syracuse. (Live) ACC  
**8 p.m.:** Pepperdine at Saint Mary's. (Live) CBSSN  
**8 p.m.:** Tennessee at Texas. (Live) ESPN  
**8 p.m.:** Houston at UCF. (Live) ESPN2  
**8 p.m.:** Sierra Canyon (CA) at Camden (NJ). (Same-day Tape) ESPNU  
**8:30 p.m.:** Brooklyn Nets at Golden State Warriors. (Live) ABC  
**8:30 p.m.:** South Carolina at Texas A&M. (Live) SEC  
**9:30 p.m.:** BYU at Pacific. (Live) ESPNU  
**10 p.m.:** Utah State at Nevada. (Live) CBSSN  
**10 p.m.:** Oregon State at Oregon. (Live) ESPN2

BOWLING

**8:30 p.m.:** Players Championship Finals. (Live) FS1

BOXING

**10 p.m.:** Top Rank: Conceicao vs. Martinez. (Live) ESPN  
**1 a.m.:** Top Rank: Conceicao vs. Martinez. (Taped) ESPN2

EQUESTRIAN

**4:30 p.m.:** Pegasus World Cup Invitational. (Live) NBC

GOLF

**11:30 a.m.:** Gainbridge LPGA, Third Round. (Live) GOLF  
**2:30 p.m.:** Fa.m.: rs Insurance Open, Final Round. (Live) GOLF  
**4:30 p.m.:** Farmers Insurance Open, Final Round. (Live) CBS

**2 a.m. Sun.:** DP World Tour Golf Slync.io Dubai Desert Classic, Final Round. (Live) GOLF

GYMNASTICS

**9:30 a.m.:** Women's College }Alabama at Auburn. (Taped) ESPNU  
**4 p.m.:** Women's College }Missouri at Kentucky. (Same-day Tape) SEC

HOCKEY

**12:30 p.m.:** Anaheim Ducks at Ottawa Senators. (Live) SPRTNET  
**3 p.m.:** Winnipeg Jets at St. Louis Blues. (Live) SPRTNET  
**3:30 p.m.:** College: Yale vs. UConn. (Live), SNY  
**7 p.m.:** Toronto Maple Leafs at Detroit Red Wings. (Live) SPRTNET  
**7 p.m.:** Vegas Golden Knights at Tampa Bay Lightning. (Live) NHL  
**10 p.m.:** Vancouver Canucks at Calgary Flames. (Live) SPRTNET

MOTORCYCLE RACING

**10 p.m.:** AMA Supercross Monster Energy Series, Round 4. (Live) CNBC

SOCCER

**7:30 a.m.:** Scottish Premier League Soccer Ross County FC vs Rangers FC. (Live) CBSSN  
**12 p.m.:** FA Women's Super League Arsenal vs Brighton & Hove Albion. (Taped) CNBC

TENNIS

**11 a.m.:** 2022 Australian Open Tennis Women's Final. (Taped) TENNIS  
**3:30 a.m.:** 2022 Australian Open Tennis Men's Final. (Live) ESPN

TRACK AND FIELD

**2:30 p.m.:** Millrose Games. (Live) NBC

SPORTS GAMBLING

In 16 days, \$1B in mobile sports bets

Newsday

NEW YORK -- New York eclipsed the \$1 billion mark in mobile sports betting handle in its first 16 days of operation in January, according to documents released by the state's Gaming Commission on Friday.

From Jan. 8, when only four sportsbooks were cleared to begin taking bets, through Jan. 23, the five operating mobile sports-

books in the state handled \$1,175,605,980 in wagers. Caesars Sportsbook leads the way with \$487,360,917 in wagers, far ahead of second-place FanDuel at \$360,005,361.

The total handle moves New York closer toward eclipsing the \$1.3 billion record handle for a month set by New Jersey in October 2021. This weekend's NFC and AFC Championship Games — the fourth week-end of NFL games where

mobile sports betting was legal in the state — figure to push New York over that number.

BetMGM began taking bets on Jan. 17, so this week's reports included five books for the first time. PointsBet began operating in the state on Jan. 24, giving New Yorkers a sixth option.

Notable sporting events since Jan. 8 include the final week of the NFL regular season, the college football national champi-

onship game, two rounds of NFL playoff games and the Australian Open, plus NBA, NHL, soccer and college basketball games.

The gross gaming revenue (GGR) — the profits made by sportsbooks on wagers — totaled \$91,427,275. Caesars made the most money at \$41,750,856.

Sportsbooks are taxed at 51% on gaming profits in New York, yielding \$46,627,910.25 thus far in tax revenue for the state.



New Britain coach Roberto Mercado has been tabbed by the Orioles to manage their minor league team in Aberdeen, Md. next summer. **COURANT FILE**

Mercado

from Page 1

to me, so I did a little more research. His background, the work he's done on The Cape, the work's done in New Britain, not only as a coach but as a leader of students. There were a lot of things lined up, and once we met him we were really impressed with his professionalism, his humility and his genuine desire to do things well. All those things together got us excited about him."

After his graduation from New Britain High, Mercado played at UConn-Avery Point and Division III Fitchburg State.

In his role as dean of students, Mercado has dealt with a wide variety of situations, including some tense times when students returned to New Britain High for in-person learning last September. As a minor league manager, where he will be commanding club-houses with young players from all over the world, his experience in problem-solving could be valuable.

"From getting to know parents and getting to know students from different backgrounds, dealing with teachers

and different personalities," Mercado said, "as well as mediations and things you do. All my experiences in my life and my jobs have helped prepare me for this."

Mercado said his parents instilled in him "a work ethic to work hard, never give up and have passion for everything you do." Other important influences are Ron Jakubowski, former superintendent of schools in New Britain, and Ron Pickler, the head coach at Yarmouth-Dennis.

"We've hired a lot of teachers," Blood said. "We look for people who can teach to be coaches. Our major league hitting coach (Ryan Fuller), he's also from Connecticut (Old Lyme and UConn), and we hired him two years ago and he was a high school teacher. We look for people who are driven to be educators, who know how to teach."

Mercado is in Sarasota, Fla., working at the Orioles instructional camp, getting to know the prospects whose development will be in his hands.

"Success for me is building those relationships with the players," he said. "And having them trust me feel confident that I am putting them in the best situations to be successful. That's the

main role in the minor league so they continue to move on. It's not necessarily about our record at the end of the season, it's about guys getting better."

The Aberdeen, Md., franchise, owned by Hall-of-Famer Cal Ripken, played for many years in the short-season NY-Penn League. When that level and league was eliminated in minor league baseball's reorganization, Aberdeen moved into High-A Northeast in 2021. The league has teams in Brooklyn and Fishkill, N.Y., the closest Mercado, who recently married his wife, Samantha, will get to Connecticut next summer.

The Orioles moved Kyle Moore was up to manage Double A Bowie, creating the opening at Aberdeen. Forrest Herrmann will be Mercado's pitching coach, Zach Cole his hitting coach.

"Success for Roberto is going to be to learn the organization's philosophy," Blood said, "and create a strong culture there with his coaching staff and with the players and just create the learning environment where the players are getting better."

*Dom Amore can be reached at damore@courant.com*

METS

Club believes Chavez is answer to its hitting woes

By Deesha Thosar  
New York Daily News

NEW YORK — On Aug. 8, 2021, Phillies ace Zack Wheeler retired 22 Mets batters in a row. The dominant right-hander, mercilessly pummeling his former team, struck out 11, walked one and gave up just two hits — both to Brandon Nimmo — in a complete-game shut-out. No Phillies pitcher had sat down that many hitters in a row since Roy Hollanday, more than a decade earlier. Yes, Wheeler was pitching like a Cy Young contender. But the sleepy Mets offense made it easy for him to shine.

The Mets are ready to put that awful offensive performance, and plenty more like it, behind them with their hiring of new hitting coach, Eric Chavez. The 44-year-old joined Buck Showalter's coaching staff this month, bringing 17 years of major-league experience to a lineup in need of Chavez's knowledge. A

Silver Slugger winner with the A's, Chavez's hands-on experience will blend with new assistant hitting coach Jeremy Barnes, who brings a more new-age and analytics-driven approach.

"I just love [Chavez's] sense of urgency, his energy level, but he's also got some reality," Showalter said on a Zoom call earlier this week. "One of the problems a lot of coaches have is they forget how hard the game was to play and how bad they were on a given night. With Eric, there's a fine line between empathy and sympathy. We had some great candidates, but Eric brought some things that I thought we're in need of, and he has some background in being a part of the New York sports culture."

So, what are the Mets in need of? Above all, a spark.

The Mets offense was disenchanting all of last season. Fans kept waiting for the unit to wake up, show life, but the weary produc-

tion lasted through the full 162-game slate. By October, they ranked 27th in runs scored (.636) and 24th in OPS (.705). Perhaps what made the lack of production worse was Mets hitters' confidence in the process — the process that was getting them exactly nowhere. It was evident well before the All-Star break that the Mets needed a transformation. If Chavez is the answer, he has a full plate and a lot of pressure to turn things around.

Almost everyone struggled. Michael Conforto disappointed in his walk year, crushing just 14 home runs to fall below Jonathan Villar (18) and Kevin Pillar (15) on the season. Francisco Lindor hit .230 across 125 games in his first year in Queens. Jeff McNeil, an All-Star in 2019, posted a mediocre OPS+ of 88. Dominic Smith spent the final month of the season on the bench, taking his .667 OPS with him.

On Aug. 18, Steve Cohen

finally cracked. The competitive and ready to win-now owner was befuddled by the constant and reckless chases on pitches outside. He tweeted: "It's hard to understand how professional hitters can be this unproductive. The best teams have a more disciplined approach. The slugging and OPS numbers don't lie." The boss called out his hitters for being in a class of their own — right near the basement.

"We interviewed a lot of really strong candidates for [the hitting coach] position," said Mets GM Billy Eppler earlier this week. "As Buck and I talked through that process, one of the themes that we kept coming back to was the mindset, the approach. I think that steered us in the direction of some experience living in the batter's box. That's how we ultimately landed on Eric, was just that ability to put together a plan for attacking a pitcher."

Lundqvist

from Page 1

Andy Bathgate (9), Adam Graves (9), Vic Hadfield (11), Mark Messier (11) and Jean Ratelle (19) also have been honored.

"I'm so happy I get an opportunity to say thank you to all the amazing in here and around this great city," said Lundqvist, who was interrupted with more chants of "Hen-rik!" during his speech. "You have supported me throughout my great career. It's been an amazing experience and its given me so much joy."

Lundqvist was joined for the ceremony by his parents Peter and Eva, twin brother

Joel, sister Gabriela, wife Therese, daughters Charli-se and Juli. Richter, Leetch, Graves and Messier were also in attendance. Current Rangers players sat on the bench during the ceremony, all wearing No. 30 jerseys and Lundqvist's name on the back. Wild players, including former teammate Mats Zuccarello were also present.

Lundqvist appeared in five All-Star games and is sixth in NHL history in wins. He also holds the Rangers' franchise records for victories (459), playoff wins (61), shut-outs (64) and games played (887). He currently serves as a studio analyst on MSG Networks' pregame and post-game shows.

He was presented with

a Rangers-themed electric guitar painted by Dave Gunnarson — the Swedish artist who painted many masks Lundqvist used during his career — and presented by tennis great John McEnroe, a framed collection of 74 pucks from his each of his regular season and playoff shutouts, three bottles of wine from Vineyard 36, and a custom Louis Vuitton steamer trunk with his No. 30 on it.

"People that know me and played with me know that I was pretty intense," Lundqvist said. "I didn't talk much. ... Teammates learned pretty quickly that a conversation with me on a game day, that would be a pretty short conversation."

"The highs were high, but

the lows were low and there was not much in between. That's how I choose to live my life for the past 20 years, and 15 here in New York, never really changed. Playing well and trying to help the team win, that was so important to me. Was it extreme? Probably. Was it healthy? Only when we were winning. That contrast I felt between winning and losing really pushed me throughout my career."

Lundqvist also spoke with media hours before the ceremony, joined by his wife, Therese, and daughters, along with Rangers general manager and president Chris Drury and former GM and president Glen Sather — now a senior adviser.



# Collector's Corner

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Toronto	23	23	.500	5
New York	23	26	.469	6½
SOUTHEAST				
	W	L	PCT	GB
Miami	31	17	.646	—
Charlotte	27	22	.551	4½
Washington	23	25	.479	8
Atlanta	22	25	.468	8½
Orlando	9	40	.184	22½
CENTRAL				
	W	L	PCT	GB
Chicago	30	17	.638	—
Cleveland	30	19	.612	1
Milwaukee	20	20	.500	1½
Indiana	17	32	.347	14
Detroit	11	36	.234	19
WESTERN CONFERENCE				
SOUTHWEST	W	L	PCT	GB
Memphis	33	17	.660	—
Dallas	28	21	.571	4½
New Orleans	18	29	.383	13½
San Antonio	18	31	.367	14½
Houston	14	34	.292	18
NORTHWEST				
	W	L	PCT	GB
Utah	30	19	.612	—
Denver	26	21	.553	3
Minnesota	24	24	.500	5½
Portland	20	28	.417	9½
Oklahoma City	14	33	.298	15
PACIFIC				
	W	L	PCT	GB
Phoenix	38	9	.809	—
Golden State	36	13	.735	3
L.A. Clippers	25	25	.500	14½
L.A. Lakers	24	25	.490	15
Sacramento	18	32	.360	21½

**FRIDAY'S RESULTS**  
Detroit at Orlando, late  
Boston at Atlanta, late  
L.A. Lakers at Charlotte, late  
Denver at New Orleans, late  
Indiana at Oklahoma City, late  
L.A. Clippers at Miami, late  
Portland at Houston, late  
Utah at Memphis, late  
Chicago at San Antonio, late  
Minnesota at Phoenix, late  
New York at Milwaukee, late

**SATURDAY'S GAMES**  
Boston at New Orleans, 7p.m.  
Indiana at Dallas, 7p.m.  
Sacramento at Philadelphia, 7:30p.m.  
Toronto at Miami, 8p.m.  
Washington at Memphis, 8p.m.  
Brooklyn at Golden State, 8:30p.m.

**SUNDAY'S GAMES**  
L.A. Clippers at Charlotte, 1p.m.  
L.A. Lakers at Atlanta, 1p.m.  
Portland at Chicago, 3:30p.m.  
Cleveland at Detroit, 6p.m.  
Dallas at Orlando, 7p.m.  
Denver at Milwaukee, 7p.m.  
San Antonio at Phoenix, 8p.m.  
Utah at Minnesota, 8p.m.

**MONDAY'S GAMES**  
L.A. Clippers at Indiana, 7p.m.  
Memphis at Philadelphia, 7p.m.  
New Orleans at Cleveland, 7p.m.  
Miami at Boston, 7:30p.m.  
Sacramento at New York, 7:30p.m.  
Toronto at Atlanta, 7:30p.m.  
Golden State at Houston, 8p.m.  
Portland at Oklahoma City, 8p.m.

**THURSDAY'S RESULTS**  
Philadelphia 105, L.A. Lakers 87  
Golden State 124, Minnesota 115

NBA INDIVIDUAL LEADERS						
Through Thursday						
SCORING AVERAGE						
Player, TEAM	G	FG	FT	PTS	AVG	
Durant, BKN	36	379	228	1053	29.3	
James, LAL	36	393	161	1047	29.1	
Embiid, PHI	37	348	329	1071	28.9	
Antetokounmpo, MIL	40	394	311	1142	28.6	
Young, ATL	43	398	269	1191	27.7	
DeRozan, CHI	40	409	290	1134	26.4	
Jokic, DEN	42	423	187	1099	26.2	
Tatum, BOS	45	406	235	1172	26.0	
Curry, GS	45	377	194	1163	25.8	
Morant, MEM	37	355	185	953	25.8	
Mitchell, UTA	40	372	148	1020	25.5	
Booker, PHO	40	361	173	999	25.0	
LaVine, CHI	40	358	162	994	24.9	
Towns, MIN	41	353	198	995	24.3	
Brown, BOS	35	304	133	841	24.0	
Beal, WAS	39	346	164	919	23.6	
Giannis-Alexand, OKC	42	330	239	966	23.0	
Harden, BKN	42	284	297	964	23.0	
Edwards, MIN	42	345	128	956	22.8	
Ingram, NO	36	294	162	808	22.4	
VanVleet, TOR	41	302	127	891	21.7	
Fox, SAC	43	338	189	904	21.0	

NFL PLAYOFFS				
CONFERENCE CHAMPIONSHIPS				
Sunday's games				
<b>AFC:</b> No. 4 Cincinnati (12-7) at No. 2 Kansas City (14-5), 3:05 p.m.				
<b>NFC:</b> No. 6 San Francisco (12-7) at No. 4 L.A. Rams (14-5), 6:40 p.m.				

**SUPER BOWL LVI**  
Sunday, Feb. 13 at **SoFi Stadium, Inglewood, Calif.**  
Conference champions, 6:30 p.m

PLAYOFF TOP PERFORMERS				
PASSING				
<b>443:</b> Patrick Mahomes II, KC vs. PIT 1/16 (30-39, 5 TD)				
<b>378:</b> Patrick Mahomes II, KC vs. BUF 1/23 (OT) (33-44, 3 TD)				
<b>366:</b> Matthew Stafford, LAR at TB 1/23 (28-38, 2 TD)				
<b>348:</b> Joe Burrow, CIN at TEN 1/22 (28-37, 0 TD)				
<b>329:</b> Josh Allen, BUF at KC 1/23 (OT) (27-37, 4 TD)				
<b>329:</b> Tom Brady, TB vs. LAR 1/23 (30-54, 1 TD)				
<b>310:</b> Derek Carr, LAS at CIN 1/15 (29-54, 1 TD)				
<b>308:</b> Josh Allen, BUF vs. NE 1/15 (21-25, 5 TD)				
RUSHING				
<b>96:</b> Elijah Metchell, SFat DAL 1/16 (27 car., TD)				
<b>83:</b> Josh Jacobs, OAK at CIN 1/15 (13 car., 0 TD)				
<b>81:</b> Devin Singletary, BUF vs. NE 1/15 (16 car., 2 TD)				
<b>72:</b> Deebo Samuel, SF at DAL 1/16 (10 car, TD)				
RECEIVING				
<b>201:</b> Gabriel Davis, BUF at KC 1/23 (OT) (8 rec., 4 TD)				
<b>183:</b> Cooper Kupp, LAR at TB 1/23 (9 rec., 1 TD)				
<b>150:</b> Tyreek Hill, KC vs. BUF 1/23 (OT) (11 rec., 1 TD)				
<b>142:</b> A.J. Brown, TEN vs. CIN 1/22 (5 rec., 1 TD)				
<b>129:</b> Aaron Jones, GB vs. SF 1/22 (9 rec., 0 TD)				
<b>119:</b> Mike Evans, TB vs. LAR 1/23 (8 rec., 1 TD)				
<b>117:</b> Mike Evans, TB vs. PHI 1/16 (9 rec., 1 TD)				
<b>116:</b> Ja'Marr Chase, CIN vs. LAS 1/15 (9 rec., 0 TD)				
<b>109:</b> Ja'Marr Chase, CIN at TEN 1/22 (5 rec., 0 TD)				
<b>106:</b> Travis Kelce, KC vs. PIT 1/16 (5 rec., 1 TD)				

TEAM HIGHS, LOWS				
MOST POINTS				
47: Buffalo vs. New Engaldn 1-15				
42: Kansas City vs. Buffalo 1-23(OT)				
42: Kansas City vs. Pittsburgh 1-16				
FEWEST POINTS				
10: Green Bay vs. San Francisco 1-22				
11: Arizona at L.A. Rams 1-17				
13: San Francisco at Green Bay 1-22				
MOST TOTAL YARDS				
552: Kansas City vs. Buffao 1-23(OT)				
482: Buffalo vs. New England 1-15				
478: Kansas City vs. Pittsburgh 1-16				
FEWEST TOTAL YARDS				
183: Arizona at L.A. Rams 1-17				
MOST RUSHING YARDS				
172: Kansas City vs. Buffalo 1-23 (OT)				
174: Buffalo vs. New England 1-15				
169: San Francisco at Dallas 1-16				
MOST NET PASSING YARDS				
372: Kansas City vs. Pittsburgh 1-16				
370: Kansas City vs. Buffalo 1-23 (OT)				
355: L.A. Rams at Tampa Bay 1-23				
TTIMES SACKED BY OPPONENT				
9, Cincinnati at Tennessee 1-22				

NHL

EASTERN CONFERENCE

ATLANTIC

Florida

44

30

9

5

65

179

126

Tampa Bay

44

29

10

5

63

152

125

Toronto

39

26

10

3

55

133

103

Boston

40

24

13

3

51

125

111

Detroit

43

18

19

6

42

118

147

Buffalo

42

13

22

7

33

111

147

Ottawa

37

13

20

4

30

105

128

Montreal

42

8

27

7

23

94

159

METRO.

GP

W

L

OT

PTS

GF

GA

Carolina

40

29

9

2

60

143

96

Pittsburgh

43

27

10

6

60

146

113

N.Y. Rangers

44

28

12

4

60

135

115

Washington

44

23

12

9

55

140

122

Columbus

41

19

21

1

39

126

148

N.Y. Islanders

36

15

15

6

36

86

97

New Jersey

42

15

22

5

35

120

148

Philadelphia

43

13

22

8

34

106

148

WESTERN CONFERENCE

CENTRAL

Colorado

41

30

8

3

63

171

121

Nashville

45

27

14

4

58

140

123

St. Louis

43

26

12

5

57

152

117

Minnesota

38

25

10

3

53

149

115

Dallas

40

22

16

2

46

120

121

Winnipeg

40

17

16

7

41

115

124

Chicago

43

16

20

7

39

107

142

Arizona

41

10

27

4

24

92

158

PACIFIC

GP

W

L

OT

PTS

GF

GA

Vegas

44

25

16

3

53

150

133

Anaheim

46

22

16

8

52

138

134

Los Angeles

44

22

16

6

50

124

120

Calgary

39

20

13

6

46

127

99

San Jose

43

22

19

2

46

119

132

Edmonton

39

21

16

2

44

128

130

Vancouver

43

19

19

5

43

110

120

Seattle

43

14

25

4

32

114

153

NOTE: Two points for a win, one point for overtime loss. Top three teams in each division and two wild cards per conference advance to playoffs.

**NOTE:** Two points for a win, one point for overtime loss. Top three teams in each division and two wild cards per conference advance to playoffs.

**FRIDAY'S GAMES**  
Detroit at Pittsburgh, 7p.m.  
Minnesota at N.Y. Rangers, 7p.m.  
Colorado at Chicago, 8:30p.m.  
Boston at Arizona, 9p.m.  
Washington at Dallas, 9p.m.

**SATURDAY'S GAMES**  
Anaheim at Ottawa, 12:30p.m.  
Los Angeles at Philadelphia, 1p.m.  
Seattle at N.Y. Islanders, 2p.m.  
Winnipeg at St. Louis, 3p.m.  
San Jose at Florida, 6p.m.  
Edmonton at Montreal, 7p.m.  
New Jersey at Carolina, 7p.m.  
Toronto at Detroit, 7p.m.  
Vegas at Tampa Bay, 7p.m.  
Buffalo at Arizona, 9p.m.  
Vancouver at Calgary, 10p.m.

**SUNDAY'S GAMES**  
Los Angeles at Pittsburgh, 1p.m.  
Seattle at N.Y. Rangers, 1p.m.  
San Jose at Carolina, 5p.m.  
Boston at Dallas, 7p.m.  
Columbus at Montreal, 7p.m.  
Minnesota at N.Y. Islanders, 7:30p.m.  
Buffalo at Colorado, 8p.m.

**MONDAY'S GAMES**  
Florida at Columbus, 7p.m.  
Anaheim at Detroit, 7:30p.m.  
Edmonton at Ottawa, 7:30p.m.  
New Jersey at Toronto, 7:30p.m.  
New Jersey at Chicago, 7:30p.m.

THURSDAY'S RESULTS				
Los Angeles 3, N.Y. Islanders 2				
Florida 4, Vegas 1				
Seattle 2, Pittsburgh 1 (OT)				
Anaheim 5, Montreal 4				
Tampa Bay 3, New Jersey 2				
Columbus 5, N.Y. Rangers 3				
Carolina 3, Ottawa 2 (SO)				
Vancouver 5, Winnipeg 1				
St. Louis 5, Calgary 1				
Edmonton 3, Nashville 2 (SO)				

NHL SCORING LEADERS				
Through Thursday				
Skater, TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS
Jonathan Huberdeau, FLA44	16	43	59	
Leon Draisaitl, EDM	39	29	30	59
Connor McDavid, EDM	38	21	37	58
Alex Ovechkin, WSH	44	29	29	58
Nazem Kadri, COL	38	16	39	55
Johnny Gaudreau, CGY	39	16	35	51
Steven Stamkos, TB	43	20	31	51
Kirill Kaprizov, MIN	37	17	32	49
Mikko Rantanen, COL	38	22	27	49
Artemi Panarin, NYR	39	12	36	48
Joe Pavelski, DAL	40	19	29	48
Adam Fox, NYR	44	7	40	47
Timo Meier, SJ	38	21	26	47
Brad Marchand, BOS	35	21	25	46
Victor Hedman, TB	44	9	35	45

ODDS

COLLEGE BASKETBALL SATURDAY				
FAVORITE		LINE	UNDERDOG	
Miami	2½		at Georgia Tech	
at Davidson	15		La Salle	
Duke	9		at Louisville	
at Tulane	1		Wichita State	
LSU	4		at TCU	
at Butler	5½		Georgetown	
at Michigan St.	4½		Michigan	
Chattanooga	9		at Citadel	
at VMI	3½		E. Tennessee St.	
at Co. Carolina	4½		Arkansas State	
at Towson	7		Drexel	
at Arkansas	7½		West Virginia	
Florida Atlantic	6½		at UTSA	
Dartmouth	5½		at Columbia	
Samford	2½		at W. Carolina	
at St. Bonaventure	10½		Saint Joseph's	
Xavier	1½		at Creighton	
at Auburn	9½		Oklahoma	
at N. Iowa	9½		Illinois State	
at Yngstown St.	6½		Milwaukee	
at Iowa State	11½		Missouri	
Saint Louis	6½		at Duquesne	
at N. Carolina	8½		NC State	
Indiana	1½		at Maryland	
at Arizona	21		Arizona State	
at S. Dakota St.	11		N. Dakota St.	
at Oakland	12½		UIC	
at SMU	10½		Temple	
Rice	5½		at So. Mississippi	
Miami (OH)	2		at E. Michigan	
Dixie State	3		at Chicago State	
at Florida St.	1½		Virginia Tech	
at Belmont	22½		UT Martin	
Georgia State	3½		at La. Monroe	
at W. Kentucky	5		Middle Tennessee	
at Ball State	9		Western Michigan	
Kansas State	1		at Mississippi	
at Appalachian St.	10		Little Rock	
at La. Tech	2		North Texas	
at JMU	2		Delaware	
Oral Roberts	7½		at Denver	
at N. Arizona	2		Portland State	
at Charleston	6		Northeastern	
at N. Illinois	7		Central Michigan	
at Richmond	2½		VCU	
at Boston Coll.	4		Pittsburgh	
at Seattle	4½		Sam Houston	
at Florida	4		Oklahoma State	
Elon	2		at William & Mary	
Abilene Christian	10½		at Lamar	
at UC Davis	2		Long Beach State	
Baylor	2		at Alabama	
Tennessee St.	6½		at E. Illinois	
at Villanova	13½		St. John's	
Illinois	3		at Northwestern	
at Washington	1½		Utah	
at Murray St.	10		Morehead State	
at USC	12		California	



**MEN'S BASKETBALL**  
**Saturday:** at DePaul,  
6:30 p.m., FS1

**WOMEN'S BASKETBALL**  
**Sunday:** at Providence,  
7:30 p.m., SNY

**UConn**  
COURANT.COM/SPORTS

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The Knicks' Julius Randle reacts to a call during the second half of a game against the Celtics on Jan 8 in Boston. **AP FILE**

KNICKS

# ‘I still want to see this thing through’

Randle insists he won’t bail on his commitment

By **Steve Popper**  
Newsday

MILWAUKEE — It might seem hard to remember that it was just a few months ago that Julius Randle, in the wake of a season in which he’d ascended to heights that his career had only hinted at, decided to sign on to a four-year extension with the Knicks immediately, passing up the opportunity to cash in on a contract extension worth more than \$80 million more.

The leader of a team that turned around on his play and the arrival of Tom Thibodeau as coach, Randle was all in. And since then he has seen the team struggle through a dismal season and criticism rise for the team, but more specifically for him, as he has heard the fans direct their ire his way.

But standing in the catacombs of Fiserv Forum Friday morning following the shoot around to prep for the game later with the Milwaukee Bucks, Randle insisted he would not change a thing and has no intention of bailing on his commitment to the Knicks.

“I wouldn’t change it,” Randle said. “I still want to be a part of it. I still want to see this thing through. I still

want to be a part of helping trying to bring a championship to the Knicks.

“So, I’m not going to be happy and be all about it when things are good and just because it’s not necessarily going the way I want it to or the team wants it to run and hide. I’m still behind this. I’m still sticking it through.”

As Randle spoke, which has come less this season as he has made his way through a difficult stretch, RJ Barrett leaned in on him, holding a microphone and listening in a show of support. Randle’s very public dissatisfaction with criticism from the fans prompted an angry response on Jan. 6, which earned him a fine from the NBA.

And after that he retreated from the media, but also it seemed almost as if he did from the team, wandering from huddles on the court. But Randle said that he remains all in.

“It’s been hard, but like my man J. Cole says, there’s beauty in the struggle,” Randle said. “It’s a struggle. We’re trying to figure it out. But this is really where you find out what people are about. This is when you find out about the character of the guys on your team, so I’m excited about — we still got a lot of games to play, so I’m excited to see how we push forward and push past it”

The team may figure it out, but figuring out what has gone on with

Randle is equally important.

“Same thing, man,” Randle said. “I’m going to stick to my guns. I’m going to stick to who I am as a person. That’s coming in, working everyday, trying to be an infectious leader with my spirit and my energy and just try to be positive.”

Thibodeau had leaned heavily on Randle last season, serving as a leader not only with his play, but almost as an extension of the coach on the court. Never a very vocal leader, it was through his example that Thibodeau found a player who worked hard and set a tone for the rest of the team.

“Look, over the course of the season you’re going to go through a lot of things,” Thibodeau said. “There’s a lot that you have to get through, that’s why you want to stick with your routine, be mentally tough through the adversity and just keep working. The only thing you can control is what you put into each and every day. If you’re thinking about what happened yesterday or what’s coming down the road you’re not going to be focused on today or what we have to get done.

“Got to be focused on today, what we have to get done. He’s proven to be a good player. He’ll get back to that. Our team has to get back to that. It’s not an individual sport. You have to count on everyone working together. We need to play better.”

Giants

from Page 1

week to ensure he interviewed.

Flores would have been the first Black head coach in Giants history. But choosing Daboll is proof that ownership ultimately followed through on its promise to let Schoen make the hire.

The Giants did significant homework to look into the negative stories about Flores’ firing in Miami. And Schoen, who worked for the Dolphins from 2008-16, had plenty of contacts to get to the bottom of the situation.

Flores is known as a strong-willed personality, which might have threatened Schoen’s authority. Daboll’s hiring is more in the mold of the Eagles’ setup with GM Howie Roseman and head coach Nick Sirianni, where the GM runs the show and the coach executes the plan.

That’s in line with the setup Mara said the Giants wanted to create with Schoen: one in which the entire football operation, including the coaching staff, reports to the GM.

“We interviewed several people who are incredible coaches and all of whom are

going to enjoy much more success in this league in their current positions and as a head coach,” Schoen said in a statement released by the team. “With that said, we — me and ownership — all felt Brian is the right person to serve as our head coach.

“Over the last four years, I have observed first-hand Brian’s strengths as a leader,” the GM added. “He is an excellent communicator, intelligent, innovative, and hard working. Brian’s genuine and engaging personality is refreshing. He fosters relationships with the players and coaches around him. He is progressive in his

vision and values collaboration, two of the attributes we think are essential.”

Daboll, born in Welland, Ontario, and raised in Rochester, N.Y., is the second straight Giants head coach hired off the Bill Belichick Patriots coaching tree, following Joe Judge. He was a part of five Super Bowl teams during two stints with New England.

Judge’s first pick for Giants offensive coordinator when he was hired in 2020 was Daboll, but he was already working with Allen in Buffalo and the organization preferred Jason Garrett.

PATRIOTS

## OC McDaniels expected to interview for Raiders job

By **Andrew Callahan**  
Boston Herald

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. — The Raiders have requested to interview Patriots offensive coordinator Josh McDaniels for their head-coaching job, according to reports.

The team’s hope is to interview McDaniels on Saturday, and Raiders owner Mark Davis has long been interested in the 45-year-old coach, per the NFL Network. McDaniels has yet to interview for a head-coaching job this cycle. The Pats’ longtime offensive coordinator met with teams

each of the past four offseasons about head-coaching vacancies.

Alabama offensive coordinator Bill O’Brien, a former Patriots assistant, is a candidate to replace McDaniels, according to ESPN. McDaniels has coordinated the offense ever since O’Brien left the team in February 2012. O’Brien replaced McDaniels in 2009, when McDaniels ended his first stint as the team’s offensive coordinator to become the Broncos head coach.

Last week, the Raiders interviewed Patriots de facto general manager Dave Ziegler for their GM opening. Ziegler was promoted to director of

player personnel last offseason, when the Pats spent a record amount of money in free agency and landed three immediate contributors in the draft, including quarterback Mac Jones.

It’s expected McDaniels would make Ziegler his general manager, if hired. The two are former college teammates, and McDaniels gave Ziegler his first NFL job in 2010, while working as the Broncos’ head coach. Ziegler spent three seasons in Denver before moving to New England, where he’s worked for nine seasons in the team’s personnel department.

UConn

from Page 1

“When we are fully healthy and have our full complement of the team on the floor, our wings, Andre (Jackson) and Tyrese (Martin), positionally rebound as good as anyone in the country,” Hurley said. “Our frontcourt players do a heck of a job on the backboard as well. Obviously we are athletic and aggressive; it lends itself to being a relentless team on the glass.”

For players like guard R.J. Cole, rebounding is synonymous with the Huskies.

“Rebounding is part of UConn’s identity,” Cole said. “That gets preached every day in practice, rebounding, defending and playing harder than the other team. That’s just something we embrace every day, so it translates into the game pretty well.”

As the Huskies play the Blue Demons, who rank No. 37 in total rebounds per game with 39.16, the battle on the boards could be pivotal. The Blue Demons, who could be without leading scorer Javon Freeman-Liberty who has been out with a groin injury, have outrebounded opponents in 12 of their 19 games.

The basics

**UConn vs. DePaul**  
**Time:** 6:30 p.m.  
**Place:** Wintrust Arena, Chicago  
**Series:** UConn leads 13-1  
**Last meeting:** UConn won, 94-60, in a Big East tournament game on March 11, 2021, at Madison Square Garden.  
**TV:** FS1 (Lisa Byington, Brian Butch)  
**Live Stream:** Fox Sports app  
**Radio:** UConn Sports Network (Mike Crispino, Wayne Norman). XM-201. Sirius-134. SXM app-964. 97.9-ESPN Hartford. WIL-1400-AM (Willimantic). WATR-1320-AM (Waterbury). WAVZ-1300-AM (New Haven). WGCH-1490-AM (Greenwich).

### DePaul (10-9, 1-8 Big East) probable starters, sixth man

Javan Johnson, F, 6-6, Gr.;

Jalen Terry, G, 6-0, So.; Nick Ongenda, C, 6-11, Jr.; David Jones, F, 6-6, So.; Brandon Johnson, F, 6-8, Gr.; Javon Freeman-Liberty, G, 6-4, Sr.

### No. 20 UConn (14-4, 5-2) probable starters, sixth man

R.J. Cole, G, 6-1, GS; Isaiah Whaley, F, 6-9, GS; Adama Sanogo, F, 6-9, So.; Tyrese Martin, G/F, 6-6, Sr.; Andre Jackson, G/F, 6-6, So.; Jordan Hawkins, G, 6-5, Fr.

The matchup

**UConn offense:** Get Sanogo going early while the team as a whole takes smart shots around the rim against DePaul’s strong shot blockers.

**UConn defense:** The main focus should be stopping Freeman-Liberty (if he plays). He has a usage rate of 29.3%, the highest on the team. If they shut him down, it forces the rest of his teammates to step up.

**DePaul offense:** The offense is built around Freeman-Liberty, who averages 21.2 points per game while shooting 44.3% from the field. If he doesn’t play, Jones will be Option 1 on offense as he is second on the team in scoring with 14.9 points per game.

**DePaul defense:** DePaul is No. 23 in NCAA Division I in block percentage with 14.3% according to KenPom, so the Huskies need to be deliberate in the shots they take.

**UConn’s key:** Play good defense while making sure to box out on the glass.

**Player to watch:** Sanogo. UConn guards may struggle to get shots off against lengthy DePaul defenders, so how he plays becomes crucial.

**About DePaul’s coach:** Tony Stubblefield. He’s in his first year coaching at DePaul after 11 years in various staff roles at Oregon.

**DePaul’s mascot:** Demon. The demon was chosen in 1907.

**DePaul famous alumni:** NBA Hall of Famer George Mikan.

Shreyas Laddha can be reached at [sladdha@courant.com](mailto:sladdha@courant.com).

COLLEGE SPORTS

## Lack of detailed NIL rules challenges NCAA enforcement

Associated Press

As the market for college athlete to earn money off their names, images and likenesses rapidly evolves, NCAA enforcement is faced with the tricky task of trying to police activities currently unregulated by detailed, uniform rules.

NCAA Vice President of Enforcement Jon Duncan told the Associated Press that letters of inquiry have gone out to multiple schools over the last few months. He declined to identify the schools but said the letters are not indicative of a formal investigation and they are frequently used for an assortment of reasons.

“It’s just dialogue with a school to get more information about whether violations have occurred,” he said this week.

The NCAA lifted most restrictions on athletes

earning money through sponsorship deals or as paid endorsers last summer after numerous states passed laws that usurped the association’s rules. The NCAA enacted an interim policy that flung open a new market, but with no consistency from state to state. Schools were told to create their own policies, following state laws where applicable.

While the NCAA has no NIL-specific bylaws, deals must still adhere to existing rules that prohibit recruiting inducements and athletes being paid solely for playing or for performance.

“We’re not enforcing NIL deals, and we’re not enforcing the interim policy, which is largely permissive” Duncan said. “We’re looking at rules that are still on the books and behaviors that are still violations. Or potentially (violations)”

## Did you know?

Hypothermia occurs when the body’s temperature drops below 95 degrees.

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# NATIONAL SPORTS REPORT

SHORTS

Steelers GM Colbert stepping down



Ben Roethlisberger isn't the only one with longtime ties to the Steelers who is stepping away. General manager Kevin Colbert, who has spent more than two decades overseeing a roster that's made the Steelers perennial contenders, is leaving after the NFL draft this spring. The 65-year-old Colbert has stuck to a "one season at a time approach" for a while. Team president Art Rooney II said Friday that Colbert wants to move into a more advisory role. The team has already conducted interviews with internal candidates Omar Khan and Brandon Hunt and shortly will turn its eye to candidates outside the organization. There is no rush to hire Colbert's replacement. Rooney said the hope is to have Colbert's successor in place after the draft. The next general manager will have a tall order in replicating Colbert's success. The Steelers won two Super Bowls and appeared in a third under his watch. They reached the playoffs 14 times since he was hired as director of football operations in 2000. Colbert will be actively involved in one final draft as the Steelers look to replace Roethlisberger.

Djokovic honored despite test doubts



Tennis star Novak Djokovic received honors at a small Adriatic Sea resort in Montenegro on Friday even as doubts re-emerged about the positive COVID-19 test he used to try to compete in the Australian Open. The BBC on Friday reported discrepancies in the serial numbers of tests Serbian authorities administered to Djokovic in the days prior to his trip to Australia, suggesting possible irregularities in the way they were issued. Djokovic's media team and the Institute of Public Health in Serbia did not immediately respond to requests for comment from the Associated Press. Senior Serbian health officials have previously said that Djokovic's test was valid and issued by a relevant institution. Djokovic was deported from Australia and barred from playing in the Australian Open earlier this month after a 11-day visa saga on the eve of the tournament because he failed to meet Australia's strict COVID-19 vaccination requirements. The 34-year-old player is not vaccinated and the Australian government later decided to cancel his visa and deport Djokovic.

Mids, defenders providing US goals



Midfielders and defenders are providing the goals the United States needs to reach the World Cup — by a wide margin. Strikers haven't found the net for five straight qualifiers, three started by Ricardo Pepi and one each by Jesús Ferreira and Gyasi Zardes. Three of the Americans' 13 goals in the first nine qualifiers have come from outside defenders, with left back Antonee Robinson, pictured, scoring his second in Thursday night's arduous 1-0 win over El Salvador. Right back Sergiño Dest had the tying goal in the 2-1 victory over Costa Rica last week. "We call our fullbacks our super-power of our team," U.S. coach Gregg Berhalter said. "We do that because they produce." With qualifying at nearly the two-thirds point going into Sunday's match at Canada, seven goals have been produced by midfielders. Weston McKennie from the center and six from wingers: Brenden Aaronson had two, and Christian Pulisic, Sebastian Lletget and Tim Weah one each, with Weah behind another that was credited as an own goal off Costa Rica's goalkeeper. —Associated Press



Rams' Cooper Kupp (10) beats Buccaneers' Antoine Winfield Jr. during Sunday's playoff game in Tampa. JASON BEHNKEN/AP

NFL PLAYOFFS

## Catch of the day

Kupp vs. Samuel for the NFC title is must-see TV

By Greg Beacham  
Associated Press

Cooper Kupp led the league in every major receiving category this season, a triple crown feat accomplished only three times previously in NFL history. Deebo Samuel also racked up huge numbers, but he wasn't content to just catch the ball. He also ran it and occasionally threw it while cementing his status as perhaps the most versatile, electrifying playmaker in football. In a sport usually defined and dominated by quarterback play, two All-Pro receivers have propelled their teams to the NFC championship game. Sunday's meeting of NFC West rivals is the third opportunity this season to watch Kupp and Samuel on the same field near the end of spectacular seasons that could be remembered long after this showdown between the Rams (14-5) and the 49ers (12-7). "I can't believe we're not talking about Deebo Samuel and Cooper Kupp (being) more highly regarded for MVP candidates," Rams defensive coordinator Raheem Morris said. "I know this is a quarterback-driven league, but these two players have absolutely defied some of the things that are out there. ... As a competitor, I can't wait to see it. As a fan, you can't wait to watch it, and that makes for a great matchup." Kupp (1,993) and Samuel (1,845) ranked 1-2 in the NFC in all-purpose yards. Kupp's 2,209 yards from scrimmage this season, including the playoffs, are the most by a receiver in NFL history, while Samuel needs only 44

yards this weekend to pass Jerry Rice (1995) for second place on that list. Kupp and Samuel carry an inordinate amount of weight for their teams' success for a receiver. The Rams and the 49ers probably wouldn't be in the NFC championship game without two of the game's top playmakers driving their offenses forward. In fact, they probably wouldn't even have won last week. Kupp made an early 70-yard TD catch followed by two stunning final-minute receptions to set up the winning field goal in the Rams' 30-27 win at Tampa Bay, finishing with 183 yards receiving. Samuel salvaged his offense's shaky performance in freezing Green Bay. After his long kickoff return set up San Francisco's first field goal, he had a tough first-down catch and converted another third-and-long with a gritty run on the final drive to set up Robbie Gould's winning kick in the Niners' 13-10 stunner. "They're great football players that are complete receivers," Rams coach Sean McVay said. "When the ball is in (Samuel's) hands, good things happen. Cooper is very similar." Kupp and Samuel have some similarities that might point to reasons for their success: Both played all four years of college ball to emerge as more fully formed talents, yet neither was a first-round pick. Both landed with head coaches considered offensive gurus who specialize in getting the most out of their players' complete talents. Samuel has become a position-less flex player under Kyle Shanahan, whose offense handed off to its best receiver 59 times this season. Samuel becomes something even more dangerous when he gets free to hit top

speed, scoring an NFL-high nine TDs on runs outside the tackles. "It's something that you really dream of as a coach, in terms of being able to utilize people in different ways to try to find advantageous looks," 49ers offensive coordinator Mike McDaniels said. "It's a lot easier to figure stuff out on Monday and Tuesday when the problem that you're trying to solve is, 'How do I get this guy the ball?' And on gameday, 'Hey, Deebo, here's the ball.' That's the best thing for a coach that you could possibly imagine." And more importantly for Sunday, Samuel has crushed the Rams this season. He had 192 yards receiving and 81 yards rushing against them while also throwing his first career touchdown pass during the 49ers' comeback for a playoff-clinching win at SoFi Stadium just three weeks ago. "Deebo right now is playing like one of the best players in the NFL," Shanahan said. "He's obviously talented, but the will that he has, it's unbelievable." Morris struggled to find comparison points for both wideouts, ultimately settling on Samuel being a version of "Anquan Boldin with speed." "You can put him in any category you want, but he's forming his own category," Morris said. This playoff run is particularly meaningful for Kupp, who was out for the season with a knee injury when the Rams made the Super Bowl three years ago. Samuel played in the Super Bowl two years ago as a rookie, and Kupp was watching from home. "You have a lot of respect for someone that's willing to go out there and do whatever they ask him to do," Kupp said. "He's doing it, and with everything he's got."

WINTER OLYMPICS PRELIMINARIES

## Nordic combined

By Larry Lage  
Associated Press

Norway's **Jarl Magnus Riiber** has been so dominant in World Cup competitions that other Nordic combined athletes are studying how he soars past the competition in ski jumping to often take a huge lead into the cross-country skiing leg of the events. They hope the homework pays off next month at the Winter Olympics in China. "I have videos of Jarl saved on my laptop," American athlete **Jared Shumate** said. "Every team and every athlete in our sport is watching video of him, trying to figure out how and why he's on another level." Nordic combined, which was part of the first Winter Olympics in 1924, challenges athletes in a unique way. They need to have finesse and fearlessness for ski jumping and the strength and stamina necessary for a 10-kilometer cross-country course. The athlete who wins the ski jumping stage starts the cross-country race in the front of the pack, followed by the rest of the competition in their order of finish. Then it's a race to the line for gold. The team event includes four teammates who jump and then head to a cross-country relay. The 24-year-old Riiber will be very motivated to win in China after falling just short of earning a spot on the podium four years ago, finishing fourth in the large and normal hill competitions. Since the Pyeongchang Games, he has been ranked No. 1 on the World Cup circuit. "He's probably going to go down as the best Nordic combined skier ever," said NBC analyst **Johnny Spillane**, a three-time Nordic combined Olympian. "He's the best jumper on the hill, generally, and could probably switch to just being a ski jumper. He's a good cross-country skier and a fantastic finisher." "He's just got so much natural talent, and he's been really good since he was 18 years old."



Norway's Jarl Magnus Riiber just missed capturing a Nordic combined medal in Pyeongchang. LISA LEUTNER/AP

Gender inequity

Nordic combined is the only Olympic sport without gender equality, preventing women from competing on the world's stage even though they compete internationally. Women broke through in ski jumping at the Sochi Games in 2014, but they will have to wait at least four more years to participate in Nordic combined at the Olympics. "There is no viable excuse left for the International Olympic Committee to not put women's Nordic combined into the 2026 Olympic Games," said **Billy Demong**, a five-time Olympian and executive director of USA Nordic.

The contenders

Riiber is expected to win both individual events (large and normal hill jumping, each of which is followed by its accompanying cross-country race), but will have plenty of competition. Each of the athletes who earned an Olympic medal four years ago will be competing in China, including one of the sport's all-time greats. Germany's **Eric Frenzel** won gold on the normal hill in South Korea — as he did at the Sochi Games — and earned gold in the team competition as well as a silver on the large hill, giving him six Olympic medals in his career. Frenzel is one medal away from matching the Nordic combined record of seven set by **Felix Gottwald** of Austria. He is tied for the all-time lead in the sport with three golds, matching Gottwald, Finland's **Samppa Lajunen** and **Ulrich Wehling** of Germany. Austria's Johannes Lamparter, who was No. 2 in World Cup points behind Riiber in mid-January, along with Germany's **Vinzenz Geiger** and **Terence Weber** are also expected to contend. Germany's **Johannes Rydzek** will defend his title on the large hill.

Longshot

The U.S. has not had a lot of success in Nordic combined, failing to have anyone on the podium at the Olympics until Spillane won the first of three silvers in 2010 and Demong won gold on the large hill and silver in the team competition. The Americans were shut out the past two Olympics. **Taylor Fletcher** won the U.S. trials, securing a spot on the Olympic team for the fourth time in what he said will be his finale. "He's one of the best cross-country skiers on the circuit," Spillane said. "He has struggled with his jumping, but he if he can do a good jump, he could be dangerous."

Teaming up

After the individual events Feb. 9 and 15, teams of four will compete in the team competition. Each will jump once and cross-country ski for 5 kilometers as part of a relay race on Feb. 17. Germany, Norway and Austria took the podium four years ago and the traditional powers are projected to be the teams to beat again next month.



# MOTORING

COURANT.COM/CLASSIFIED/AUTOMOTIVE



# Fancy duds for Subaru WRX

The 2022 Subaru WRX's body is entirely new, not sharing a single body panel with the Impreza sedan for the first time since the WRX badge arrived in the U.S. as a 2002 model.

This model gets a total, timely makeover for the new year

By Henry Payne | The Detroit News

SANTA ROSA, California — An old stagecoach trail running through Mendocino County called Mountain View Road is hell. Its blind, narrow, asphalt path is pocked with patches and neglect. It snakes below a canopy of redwood trees, the perpetually damp surface iced with pine needles making the road surface even more challenging.

My 2022 Subaru WRX tester was in heaven.

Rally bred, the WRX (short for World Rally Cross) cut across the challenging terrain like Barry Sanders through a defensive line. Stiffly damped, its suspension absorbed road irregularities. Barreling into a tight series of S turns, I flicked the stick into second, then blasted out of the corner — the all-wheel-drive system propelled by 271 ponies.

A road that would be a nightmare in the average family SUV turns into a grin-inducing playground at the wheel of the WRX.

The swift Subie is the latest remade entry in my favorite automotive segment: pocket rockets. These talented hellions will happily do daily chores all week, then gleefully devour country roads on the weekend. It's a segment apparently sheltered from the SUV revolution — so passionate is its fan base (guilty as charged), so capa-

ble are the players.

Each athlete brings a unique skill set to the arena, with the Subaru flaunting manual-shifting, all-wheel-drive DNA born of some of the toughest rally-racing terrain in the world. Mountain View Road? Ha, have you seen Motu Road Gorge in New Zealand? Like the Volkswagen Golf GTI, WRX is a segment icon.

And like the GTI, the 'Ru got a total makeover for the new model year.

The remake is timely given the all-out assault by its competitive set on the market. Notably, WRX has been challenged by the Mazda3 Turbo as the only segment competitor offering AWD — a boon to those of us living in snow country.

The Mazda has set segment benchmarks for looks and interior panache. Its gorgeous tablet-topped dash and hatchback utility make it a formidable rival.

Subie answers with



The 2022 Subaru WRX instrument panel. MARK PHELAN/DETROIT FREE PRESS PHOTOS

its most daring exterior style ever, its boomerang headlights bracketing the familiar hexagonal grille while also emphasizing the compact car's wider stance compared with the standard Impreza compact car. Indeed, while WRX shares the Global Platform that undergirds Impreza, the WRX has divorced itself from its underpowered sibling and adopting its own unique body panels. The blistered rear fenders and huge quad-pipe-engorged rear diffuser instantly send a message as you come upon a WRX: Do you know who you are tangling with?

More controversial are blocky black fender claddings that echo other, more-off-road oriented Subaru Wilderness models. The cladding is unusual. But given WRX's rally focus and liberal use of black makeup, the styling works remarkably well.

Inside, the 'Ru brings a trendy new 11.6-inch

center screen copied from its Outback and Legacy siblings. The touch screen (complete with Apple CarPlay and Android Auto connectivity) is easier to use than the Mazda's sometimes quirky remote rotary controller.

Style marks go to the automatic-shifting Mazda, but the Subaru is intensely performance driven, starting with a tight six-speed shifter.

Plunging through the redwoods, I never missed a shift. The throws are short, the pedals conveniently placed for heel-and-toe downshifts, even for my size 15s. The arrangement is better than the Golf GTT's stick, if not on par with the Honda Civic Si's terrific shifter — one of the best I've experienced this side of a Porsche.

With a quieter cabin than the last gen, the WRX engine feels curiously removed from otherwise pulse-pounding perfor-

mance. Take the AWD system, for example.

While the Si and GTI bring superb front-wheel-drive, limited-slip differentials that help rotate them through the twisties, the 'Ru goes all out with a rear-wheel-biased, longitudinally mounted low-center-of-gravity Boxer engine that feeds all that power to all four wheels all the time. You know, like an Audi.

Adding nearly another half-liter to last gen's 2.0-liter engine, the Subie pulls hard. Past quibbles about turbo-lag are forgotten. As I overcooked it into a mountain switchback, the rear end came around nicely as I applied throttle.

So proud is Subaru of its AWD drive grip that it provides sticky summer tires — standard — for WRX.

I'm a sucker for hatchbacks, and the Golf's hatch utility gives it a leg up over WRX and Si. Subarus are traditionally strong on the

standard feature front, but the manual WRX oddly overlooks adaptive cruise control. ACC — especially for the young (average age 37) WRX buyer — is becoming an essential feature. Both GTI and Si offer it on their manuals.

Not overlooked is seating comfort. Over four hours of aggressive driving, my big 6-foot-5-inch frame never felt uncomfortable.

Rear legroom is admirable, too. The 'Ru has put its extra inch of wheelbase to good use, and could fit my giraffe legs easily behind myself in the back seat. But for the tight Mazda, roomy rear seating for four has become a segment staple — though your passengers may squirm when you point at the S curves ahead.

So iconic is the WRX that Subaru no longer feels the need to enter it in a high-profile race series. It exited the World Rally Championship (recording a record 46 wins) over a decade ago, and American Rallycross expired during the pandemic. The WRX is not alone in the Subaru performance lineup, sandwiched between the BRZ and the winged STI.

As engaging as the rear-wheel-dive BRZ is, however, WRX — for about the same price — shows off its value with winter-friendly AWD, comfy seating for four, deep trunk space and big-screen ergonomics.

## Advanced driving assistance systems don't equal self-driving technology

By Eric D. Lawrence  
Detroit Free Press

Having an advanced driver assistance system in your car, where cameras and sensors allow it to offer things like adaptive cruise control or lane centering, doesn't mean you have a self-driving vehicle.

Drivers still need to be alert and paying attention to what's up ahead.

But some manufacturers have oversold how much their systems can do, which

can lead to real-world consequences, especially when drivers do irresponsible things behind the wheel, according to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety.

"In egregious cases, drivers have been documented watching videos or playing games on their cell-phones or even taking naps while speeding down the expressway," according to an IIHS news release.

What's needed to limit these types of situations

are adequate safeguards, according to IIHS, which plans to begin rating them later this year.

"To earn a good rating, systems will need to ensure that the driver's eyes are directed at the road and their hands are either on the wheel or ready to grab it at all times. Escalating alerts and appropriate emergency procedures when the driver does not meet those conditions will also be required," IIHS said, noting that it's not

clear that these systems actually improve safety.

Consumer Reports said it plans to start including scoring for its 2022 autos Top Picks next month based on whether the advanced driver assistance systems encourage safe driving.

Beginning with the 2024 model year, Consumer Reports said it would start deducting points from vehicles with systems that don't have adequate driver monitoring.



With BlueCruise drive assist engaged, the instrument display in a Ford F-150 glows blue with self-driving icons. FORD





The Audi e-tron GT quattro. AUDI AG

AUTO REVIEW

Audi e-tron GT is an elegant, electrifying but expensive EV

By Henry Payne  
The Detroit News

The last time I saw the Audi e-tron GT, it was being mobbed by members of a panting press at the 2018 Los Angeles Auto Show with actor Robert Downey Jr. behind the wheel. The GT hasn't lost its appeal.

With a long, lean Audi figure draped over the same bones that carry the Porsche Taycan EV, the e-tron is a rocket ship with four doors. It's also a lot more fun with an in-house charger.

EVs are still a niche for customers with deep pockets. If you have the coin for my \$115,695 (\$108,195 after the federal tax credit!) e-tron tester, it is a sensational metro commuter. Squeeze the pedal and merge effortlessly into traffic. Stomp the pedal out of a Woodward stoplight and leave muscle cars behind. Creep silently into the American Speed Festival parking lot at M1 Concourse's Checkered Flag Charity event, and heads swiveled to follow the GT's supermodel-on-wheels figure.

Well, maybe not the face. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, but the Audi's black-masked face is not as engaging as the Porsche with its unique teardrop

2021 Audi e-tron GT

**Vehicle type:** Battery-powered, all-wheel-drive, five-passenger sedan  
**Price:** \$103,445 including \$1,045 destination fee (\$115,695 Premium Plus as tested)  
**Power plant:** 93.4 kWh lithium-ion battery with twin electric-motor drive  
**Power:** 496 horsepower (522 in Boost mode), 464 pound-feet torque  
**Transmission:** Single-speed direct drive/front axle and two-speed/rear axle  
**Performance:** 0-60 mph, 3.9 seconds (mfr.); top speed, 152 mph  
**Weight:** 5,060 pounds  
**EPA fuel economy (city/highway):** 82 / 98

headlights. Without the e-tron's four rings, the face could be mistaken for the love child of a Dodge Charger and an Audi A5. The tapered roof and beautifully sculpted tail — anchored by Audi's direction-arrow-taillights — is what makes this GT stand out from the masses. The interior will be familiar to Audi customers — just as the Taycan resembles the Porsche family — an indication of the brand's determination to make the EV experience comfortable, not a leap into the unknown. The interior

sits under a Tesla-like full-cabin sunroof that adapts to sunlight overhead. A nifty chiclet shifter negotiates the two-speed automatic transmission. Otherwise the instrument and infotainment displays are vintage Audi, with haptic touch commands and striking Google Earth navigation displays. The challenge for Audi buyers is how it stacks up to other vehicles in the showroom. There are a lot of sweets in this candy shop. My friends downsized to an RS5 from a RS7 Sportback. They are the same size, but e-tron does not have the RS5's handier hatchback utility. Perhaps Audi had to conform to the Taycan's trunk design to produce two sedans off the same platform. The e-tron is a tease to A5 owners until/if EV prices drop in half. Especially since, at 238 miles of range, it is not an easy long-distance car. Pair the e-tron GT with a gas-powered Audi SQ5 and you have the ideal two-car garage. Just remember to plug your GT into the Juicebox. Henry Payne is auto critic for The Detroit News. Find him at hpayne@detroitnews.com or Twitter @HenryEPayne.

What's wrong with the A/C?

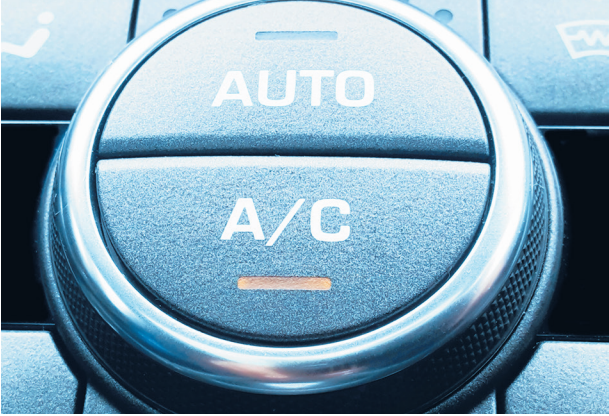


Bob Weber  
Motormouth

**Q:** My 2017 Honda Pilot with the Touring package has 56,000 miles and is a wonderful vehicle except for the air conditioning. At various times while on long trips, the A/C blows warm air. Changing temperatures or switching on and off does not change the temp. The only hope is to turn the engine off for about 90 minutes before driving again. We can't do that until reaching our destination. The authorized Honda dealer's repair shop cannot find a problem and assures us the A/C system is in good working order. They suggest bringing the vehicle in when the problem occurs. That isn't possible because it occurs on long trips. What can I do to solve this problem? — J.C., West Hartford, Connecticut

**A:** It gives me a warm feeling getting an air conditioning question in the winter. The A/C removes humidity as it cools. That water vapor then becomes liquid water that drains out of the HVAC housing by way of a rubber tube. If the tube gets clogged, the water collects on the evaporator coils and turns to ice. The ice then blocks airflow. Turning off the A/C (need not turn off the engine) allows the ice to melt. Solution: Have the tube cleaned.

**Q:** My daughter drives a 2003 Toyota Camry. The car has no TPMS so I've just put pressure monitoring valve caps on her tires. Seems like a great way to visually keep an eye on the pressure while she is away



If your car's air conditioner stops working, get the tube that connects to the HVAC system cleaned. DREAMTIME

at school. Curious if you've had any experience with these. Is there a risk of the caps loosening, which would slowly deflate the tire? — R.S., Lindenhurst, Illinois

**A:** I have used them, but not for a while. They were kind of accurate but have probably been improved since then. Although not as accurate as the tire pressure monitoring system (TPMS), they will at least alert you to a drop in pressure. Don't worry about them getting loose.

**Q:** I've read in your column and elsewhere about the value of catalytic converters. In 2013, I purchased a new Ford Taurus SHO. I had it super tuned, which included replacing the exhaust system with less restrictive converters. I have the original factory converters. My question: How do I go about legally selling them? Thanks ahead for your consideration of my question and response. — A. H., Coal City, Illinois

**A:** Auto parts stores usually collect a core charge, which they refund when the old parts are returned. If you have ever bought a battery, you will be familiar with this process. But that core charge refund window has probably closed by now. If the cats are in good condition, an auto recycling/

salvage yard may be happy to take them, but don't expect to get much money.

**Q:** My very handy son-in-law (he's not a kook) firmly believes in keeping at least one car with no computerized components so that he can mechanically fix anything that goes wrong — kind of like the people in Cuba who are still repairing classic 20th century American cars with all sorts of fabricated parts. I always wondered about the utility of this idea. But now — in this era of global trade with chip shortages and supply chain issues — I wonder if he's onto something. What's your take on this? — B.M., Chicago

**A:** I have heard a similar argument for keeping a landline phone. I must admit, it is not a bad idea.

Bob Weber is a writer and mechanic who became an ASE-certified Master Automobile Technician in 1976. He maintains this status by seeking certification every five years. Weber's work appears in professional trade magazines and other consumer publications. His writing also appears in automotive trade publications, Consumer Guide and Consumers Digest. Send questions along with name and town to motormouth.tribune@gmail.com.

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WEATHER

SATURDAY






SUNRISE NOON SUNSET

Snow, heavy at times, windy. North wind at 15 to 25 mph, gusts up to 45 mph. 10 to 20 inches of snow.

HIGH 19°  
LOW 7°

SUNDAY






SUNRISE NOON SUNSET

Sunny, very breezy and cold.

HIGH 24°  
LOW 4°

MONDAY






SUNRISE NOON SUNSET

Partly sunny and chilly.

HIGH 32°  
LOW 13°

TUESDAY






SUNRISE NOON SUNSET

Partly sunny and very cool.

HIGH 38°  
LOW 28°

WEDNESDAY







SUNRISE NOON SUNSET

Mostly cloudy and milder.

HIGH 45°  
LOW 35°

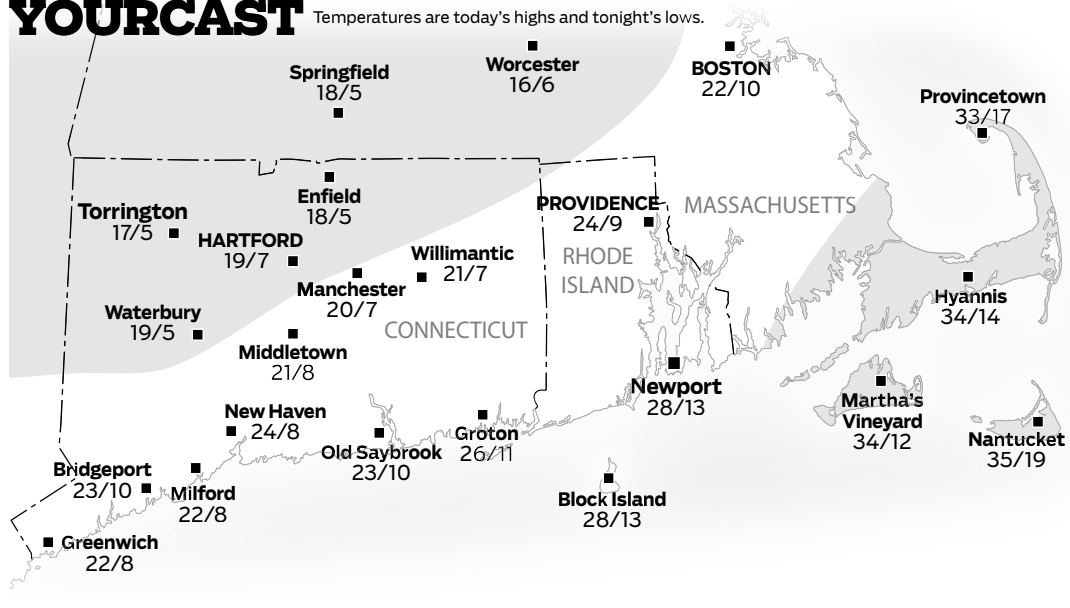
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YOURCAST



OUTLOOK

A powerful and rapidly strengthening nor'easter to the southeast of New England will produce heavy snow and strong gusty winds on Saturday. The storm will drop the most snow since the February 9, 2017 blizzard, at least in parts of the state. It could end up being the most snow since the February 8-9, 2013 blizzard which dropped 40 inches in Hamden and 38 inches in Milford. 20 inches or more accumulation is forecast for the eastern quarter of the state, while 4 to 10 inches will occur in western sections. The snow tapers off late this afternoon and early this evening.

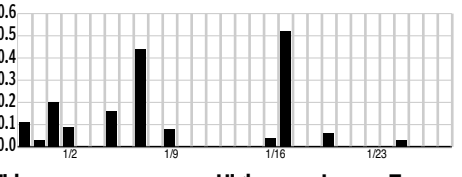
-Gary Lessor

ALMANAC

Precipitation In Inches	Total	Normal
Yesterday (by 7 p.m.)	Trace	0.10
Month to date	1.62	2.98
Total this year	1.62	2.98
Snowfall In Inches		
Yesterday (by 4 p.m.)	Trace	0.5
Total this year	11.5	24.9

Precipitation, temperature at Windsor Locks

30-day Precipitation History In Inches



Tides

	High	Low	Temp.
N.L. State Pier	6:28 a.m. 6:52 p.m.	12:17 a.m. 1:17 p.m.	39°
Saybrook Jetty	7:39 a.m. 8:03 p.m.	1:10 a.m. 2:10 p.m.	37°
Connecticut River at Portland	10:22 a.m. 10:46 p.m.	4:56 a.m. 5:56 p.m.	
Madison	7:54 a.m. 8:32 p.m.	1:32 a.m. 2:21 p.m.	36°
New Haven	8:14 a.m. 8:51 p.m.	1:56 a.m. 2:45 p.m.	35°
Stamford	8:18 a.m. 8:55 p.m.	2:10 a.m. 2:49 p.m.	37°

River Stage at Hartford:

3.02 feet at 6:30 p.m.

Boating Weather

	L.I. Sound W	L.I. Sound E	B. I. Sound
Snow			
Wind	N, 25-30	N, 25-30	N, 25-30
Seas	3-5 ft.	4-7 ft.	7-10 ft.

Air Quality Forecast For Today

Good 21

Air Quality Today

Low 0

Ultraviolet Index Today

4°

Wind Chill Today

Today Tomorrow





Sunrise 7:06 a.m. 7:05 a.m.

Sunset 5:01 p.m. 5:02 p.m.

Moonrise 5:05 a.m. 6:10 p.m.

Moonset 1:57 p.m. 3:05 p.m.

Moon Phase



New Feb 1 First Feb 8 Full Feb 16 Last Feb 23

AROUND THE WORLD

Today's forecast in cities not included in the maps above:

<b>NEW ENGLAND</b>	Bangor 12 2 SN Burlington 11 -2 C Caribou 9 3 SN Concord 17 3 SN Montpelier 9 -8 SF Mt. Wash. 4-18 SN Portland 17 4 SN Woods Hole 26 12 SN	Baltimore 30 12 SF Bismarck 40 13 PC Boise 26 8 S Buffalo 16 7 PC Charleston 47 22 S Cincinnati 27 18 S Cleveland 19 12 PC Indianapolis 27 19 PC Jacksonville 52 23 S Las Vegas 61 41 S Miami Beach 60 40 S Milwaukee 22 18 PC	Nashville 35 25 S New Orleans 50 37 S New York 24 13 SN Okla. City 68 31 S Omaha 47 20 S Orlando 55 29 S Pittsburgh 19 11 PC Raleigh 37 15 PC St. Louis 42 28 PC Salt Lake City 41 18 S San Antonio 66 38 S San Diego 69 51 PC	San Juan 85 72 PC Tucson 70 45 PC	<b>WORLD</b>	Budapest 40 36 I Buenos Aires 84 70 PC Cairo 61 47 PC Cancun 73 60 PC Dubai 77 61 S Dublin 50 41 C Edinburgh 52 34 PC Helsinki 64 23 SF Hong Kong 36 54 C Istanbul 43 32 SH Jerusalem 48 39 C Johannesburg 72 59 R Singapore 93 75 S	Stockholm 43 30 I Sydney 84 72 PC Tel Aviv 60 40 SH Tokyo 46 34 C Toronto 14 5 S Vancouver 43 39 R Warsaw 37 34 SH
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KEY: S Sunny, C Cloudy, PC Partly Cloudy, R Rain, SH Showers, SN Snow, SF Snow Flurries, T T-storms

THURSDAY'S LATE HIGH SCHOOL RESULTS

BOYS BASKETBALL

CCC-Inter  
EAST HARTFORD 93, MALONEY 57  
MALONEY (2-8): Tylee Flowers 0-1-1, Donte Kelly 6-8-20, Tijion Johnson 2-0-4, Raschawn Shelton 1-0-2, Justice Hanna 3-2-8, Tomas Medina 1-0-2, Marquis Ward 3-0-7, Gavin Moorer 1-0-2, Ja'vony De'leon 5-0-10, Josh Boganski 0-1-1. Totals 38-12-93.  
EAST HARTFORD (7-6): Chris Lomax 9-0-20, Favour Okeke 4-1-9, Elijah Serrano 1-3-5, Zander Robinson 10-0-21, Chris Brown 1-0-2, Jaze James 0-4-4, Azeem Indawala 1-0-3, Jordan Ruiz 1-0-2, Josh Ikechukwu 1-0-2, David Pardo 4-0-8, Dom Laduca 4-4-13, Justin Victorin 2-0-4. Totals 122-55.

M	11	17	14	15	-	57
EH	22	21	26	24	-	93

Note: Lomax had a double-double with 10 rebounds, 3assists, 2blocks, Robinson had 10 rebounds and Laduca had 3steals.

MIDDLETOWN 61, ENFIELD 49  
MIDDLETOWN (7-3): Chace Petgrave 2-4-8, Matt Steuerwald 2-2-8, Tim Vaughters 1-0-2, Omar Gutierrez 1-0-3, Elijah Wilborn 9-3-21, Marshall Butler 2-0-5, Nasir McDaniel-Cade 5-1-14. Totals 22-10-61.  
ENFIELD (3-9): Kaden Birkett 0-1-1, Josiah Whaley 1-1-4, Isaiah Plummer 8-1-21, Alex Herron 1-0-2, Tighe Thebodeau 8-0-21. Totals 18-3-49.

M	16	18	12	15	-	61
E	12	11	21	5	-	49

Note: Lomax had a double-double with 10 rebounds, 3assists, 2blocks, Robinson had 10 rebounds and Laduca had 3steals.

HMTCA 57, INNOVATION 33  
INNOVATION (4-7): Yonathan Ramos 1-2-4, Jamall Kulaib 1-0-2, Nae'shaun Robertson 3-2-8, Amari Cruz 4-2-12, Jayden Newell-Kemp 2-1-5, Savion Alston 1-0-2. Totals 12-7-33.  
HMTCA (5-8): Seth Moore 4-2-10, Christian Smith 6-3-16, Eyad Anwer 1-2-4, Josh O'Neal 5-1-11, Derrick Sheets 5-0-11, Russell Smith 1-3-5. Totals 22-11-57.

T	11	13	11	14	-	49
WL	20	21	22	14	-	77

GIRLS BASKETBALL

CCC-Inter  
ROCKY HILL 46, TOLLAND 42  
TOLLAND (1-12): Sara Clokey 3-3-9, Maddie Kolb 3-0-7, Sophia Rotondaro 3-1-7, Shaylin Carney 2-0-4, Kelly LeBel 3-2-7, Laurny Gaylord 3-0-6. Totals 17-6-42.  
ROCKY HILL (8-5): Abigail Boutin 1-1-3, Nicole Polites 0-2-2, Alyssa Gau 4-2-10, Kate Oostendorp 0-3-3, Faith Beliveau 1-0-2, Maleena Muzio 2-3-7, Christina DeNovellis 7-5-19. Totals 15-16-46.

T	16	5	10	11	-	42
RH	8	9	11	18	-	46

Note: DeNovellis had 9 rebounds and Boutin had 7 rebounds.

GLASTONBURY 41, BRISTOL EASTERN 37  
BRISTOL EASTERN (4-6): Talgan Parent 0-0-0, Vanessa Drury 2-2-6, Clara Collins 7-14-29, Janessa Gonzalez 0-2-2, Emily Plendak 0-0-0. Totals 9-18-37.  
GLASTONBURY (8-5): Sydney Keh 3-4-11, Kiley Feeney 1-4-7, Hailey Moriarty 1-0-3, Skylar Fiske 2-0-5, Gisel Astiasaran 2-0-4, Madison Handrahan 3-2-9, Lily Woodworth 1-0-2, Alyssa Healey 1-1-3. Totals 13-11-41.

BE	7	8	8	14	-	37
GE	11	8	16	6	-	41

Note: DeNovellis had 9 rebounds and Boutin had 7 rebounds.

VR C

16 18 6 8 - 48  
6 13 12 5 - 36

CRAL  
PARISH HILL 59, WEAVER 34  
PARISH HILL (10-3): Kristie Zator 14-5-36, Ashlyn Kemp 6-0-12, Grace Quinn 3-1-8, Lexi Smardon 0-2-2, Charley Bennett 0-1-1. Totals 23-9-59.  
WEAVER (6-6): Nicole Linares 4-0-11, Takrya Allerdryce 4-0-8, Enajlha Gilbert 2-3-8, Angie Solomon 0-4-4, Kellisa Facey 1-0-2, Jasmine Cardona 0-1-1. Totals 11-8-34.

PH	11	16	17	15	-	59
W	11	7	5	11	-	34

Note: Zator had a double-double with 18 rebounds and Smardon had 6 assists.

Others  
MERCY 43, NFA 16  
NFA (X): Nevaeh Yorke 6-0-13, Caitlin Daley 0-1-1, Brooke Straver 0-0-0, Hannah Graham 1-0-2, Jordan Fabry 0-0-0. Totals 7-1-16.  
MERCY (X): Avery Kohs 3-0-6, Sophie Hedge 5-4-16, Ava Giansiracusa 5-0-10, Melina Ford 1-0-2, Winnie Ciccarello 1-0-2, Caelyn McMahon-Egan 1-0-3, Bella Gonzalez 2-0-4. Totals 17-4-43.

N	3	9	2	2	-	16
M	18	13	7	5	-	43

WETHERSFIELD 53, ROCKVILLE 28  
WETHERSFIELD (5-5): Maia Berdebbs 1-1-3, Sophie Adams 4-1-9, Vanessa Venditti 4-0-12, Olivia Barnett 1-0-2, Alison Wagner 4-0-8, Sindy Hima 2-0-5, Ella Alger 4-0-10, Mackenzie Mori 2-0-4. Totals 22-2-53.  
ROCKVILLE (3-10): Layla Tate 1-3-6, Sara Stone 1-1-3, Julia Szuminski 0-1-1, Anaya Tolton 0-1-1, Jaidan Torres 3-0-6, Jenny Forski 5-1-11. Totals 10-7-28.

W	15	15	18	5	-	53
R	1	3	9	15	-	28

EAST GRANBY 42, ACHIEVEMENT FIRST 21  
ACHIEVEMENT FIRST (2-9): DeAsiah Jones 2-0-6, Arya Grace-Pearson 3-1-7, Kadejah Weede 1-0-2, Janiya Reid 3-0-6. Totals 9-1-21.  
EAST GRANBY (2-8): Melina Betts 2-1-5, Megan Benner 1-2-4, Morgan Egan 3-0-6, Sarah Spinger 2-1-5, Ava Guyer 2-0-4, Julia Walsh 4-2-10, Taylor Hayes 2-2-6. Totals 17-8-42.

AF	2	4	7	8	-	21
EG	23	9	6	4	-	42

FRIDAY'S HIGH SCHOOL RESULTS

BOYS BASKETBALL

NCCC  
SMSA 51, EAST GRANBY 26  
EAST GRANBY (5-8): Kenzie Vick 2-0-4, Patrick Lakomy 3-0-9, Evan Malinowski 1-2-5, Bon Nardi 1-1-4, Brady Gill 0-1-1, Nate Kraiza 1-0-3. Totals 8-4-26.  
SMSA (11-0): Ginn Shaw 3-4-10, Nizaiyah Bogar 4-0-9, Abijah Miller 2-2-6, Kemani Thompson 8-1-17, Daniel Hernandez 4-0-9. Totals 21-7-51.

EG	3	6	10	7	-	26
S	14	14	17	6	-	51

Note: Thompson had 7rebounds, 5assists, 5 steals and Miller had 3rebounds, 4blocks.

GRANBY 77, BOLTON 27

Shoreline  
EAST HAMPTON 73, OLD LYME 47  
OLD LYME (4-8): Nick Cox 2-0-5, John Almy 6-0-16, Jacob Ritchie 1-0-2, Frank Sablone 1-0-2, Sam Mullaney 1-0-2, Casey Hurtgen 1-0-2, Caden Monte 3-1-7, Calvin Monte 5-0-10, Reese Maguire 0-1-1. Totals 20-2-47.  
EAST HAMPTON (8-4): Brady Lynch 7-1-18, Drew DiStefano 6-0-16, Jacob Karrenberg 1-0-2, Jye Lynch 5-3-13, Jack Blakey 5-1-11, Nate Ireland 6-1-13. Totals 30-6-73.

OL	9	17	10	11	-	47
EH	20	29	14	10	-	73

MORGAN 51, PORTLAND 50

CRAL  
CAPITAL PREP 77, PARISH HILL 29

NVL  
ST. PAUL 71, WOODLAND 67 (OT)

GIRLS BASKETBALL

NCCC  
ELLINGTON 51, HMTCA 11  
EAST WINDSOR 25, ROCKVILLE 16  
COVENTRY 53, SOMERS 40

Shoreline  
EAST HAMPTON 42, OLD LYME 39 (OT)  
EAST HAMPTON (12-1): Amber Murphy 1-0-2, Liana Salamone 10-5-25, Delaney Russell 1-1-3, Jackie Russell 4-2-12, Jordan Murphy 0-0-0. Totals 16-8-42.  
OLD LYME (6-6): Ava Roth 3-0-6, Kate Walsh 3-0-7, Ali Kyle 2-0-5, Alexis Fenton 3-3-10, Megan Loflin 3-5-11, Melanie Warren 0-0-0. Totals 14-8-39.

EH	7	9	13	6	-	42	
OL	9	9	6	12	3	-	39

Note: Loflin had a double-double with 16 rebounds.

CTC  
NORWICH TECH 37, VINAL TECH 24  
NORWICH TECH (3-9): Kaylee Gray 3-0-6, Autumn Lovett 2-3-7, Autumn Hanks 4-0-9, Olivia Luurtsema 2-1-5, Destiny Burditt 1-0-2, Ashlyn Bill 3-2-8. Totals 15-6-37.  
VINAL TECH (5-5): Brianna Nowakowski 0-0-0, Daneja Haynes 2-2-6, Damariya Fountain 6-2-12, Gabby Williams 0-0-0, Maddie Sage 1-2-4. Totals 9-6-24.

NT	5	14	9	9	-	37
VT	4	6	12	2	-	24

Note: Gray had 13rebounds and Bill had 10 rebounds.

GRASSO TECH 33, CHENEY TECH 32  
WINDHAM TECH 53, PRINCE TECH 23

CRAL  
CIVIC LEADERSHIP 18, MLC 3

ECC  
BACON ACADEMY 49, KILLINGLY 33  
KILLINGLY (8-7): Ella Lach 1-0-2, Emma Carpenter 2-4-9, Hannah Grudzein 3-0-6, Sydney Crabtree 1-0-2, Sophia Moore 2-1-6, Makala Dube 2-0-5, Aila Gutierrez 1-1-3. Totals 12-6-33.  
BACON ACADEMY (12-1): Ashley Lizotte 0-1-1, Valerie Luizzi 5-1-11, Marissa Budd 6-6-18, Cara Shea 3-0-6, Emma Mancuso 5-3-13. Totals 19-11-49.

K	7	7	8	11	-	33
BA	13	10	17	9	-	49

Note: Luizzi had 8Rebounds, 4steals, Mancuso had 7rebounds, 4steals and Nudd had 6 rebounds.

BOYS HOCKEY

Others  
NORTHWEST CATHOLIC 8, HAMDEN 2

WRESTLING

Others  
LEDYARD 54, OLD LYME 4

GIRLS GYMNASTICS

Shoreline  
HADDAM-KILLINGWORTH CO-OP 138.95, VALLEY REGIONAL 131.3, OLD LYME 110.3  
Note: H-K's Juliana Gagliardi and East Lyme's Kaitlyn Abbey (competing as an individual) tied

for first in the all-around with a 37.1.

THURSDAY'S LATE COLLEGE RESULTS

MEN'S BASKETBALL

CENTRAL 65, LIU 62  
ST. FRANCIS-BROOKLYN 71, SACRED HEART 66

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

LIU 74, CENTRAL 67  
QUINNIPIAC 62, CANISIUS 53  
ST. FRANCIS-BROOKLYN 63, SACRED HEART 37  
FAIRFIELD 59, MARIST 39

FRIDAY'S COLLEGE RESULTS

MEN'S BASKETBALL

ST. JOSEPH 85, ELMS 49  
TRINITY AT MIDDLEBURY, LATE  
AMHERST AT WESLEYAN, LATE  
FAIRFIELD AT RIDER, LATE  
MARIST AT QUINNIPIAC, LATE

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

EASTERN 86, PLYMOUTH STATE 44  
REGIS 68, ST. JOSEPH 63  
WESLEYAN AT AMHERST, LATE  
PRINCETON AT YALE, LATE  
MEN'S HOCKEY  
TRINITY AT AMHERST, LATE  
WESLEYAN AT HAMILTON, LATE  
WOMEN'S HOCKEY  
SACRED HEART 4, POST 1  
BOSTON COLLEGE AT UCONN, LATE  
COLBY AT TRINITY, LATE  
AMHERST AT WESLEYAN, LATE  
YALE AT BROWN, LATE  
COLGATE AT QUINNIPIAC, LATE

WRESTLING

WESLEYAN AT RIC, LATE

MEN'S SWIMMING

CONN. COLLEGE AT WESLEYAN, LATE  
SPRINGFIELD AT TRINITY, LATE

WOMEN'S SWIMMING

CENTRAL 193, SOUTHERN 50  
CONN. COLLEGE AT WESLEYAN, LATE  
SPRINGFIELD AT TRINITY, LATE

MEN'S SQUASH

HARVARD AT TRINITY, LATE

WOMEN'S SQUASH

HARVARD AT TRINITY, LATE

SATURDAY'S COLLEGE SCHEDULE

MEN'S BASKETBALL

Trinity at Williams, 3p.m.  
Yale at Princeton, 6p.m.  
UConn at DePaul, 6:30p.m.

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Quinnipiac at Niagara, 1p.m.

MEN'S HOCKEY

Trinity at Hamilton, 3p.m.  
CT Collegiate Tourney (Bridgeport)  
Yale vs. UConn, 3:30p.m.  
Sacred Heart vs. Quinnipiac, 7p.m.

WOMEN'S HOCKEY

Colby at Trinity, 4p.m.

WRESTLING

Trinity at Alvernia Quads, 10a.m.



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Biscuit-topped turkey chili in a cast-iron skillet doesn't need hours of simmering. It's weeknight fast. DAVID MALOSH/THE NEW YORK TIMES

# Chili and biscuits — ALL IN ONE PAN

By Melissa Clark  
The New York Times

Cooking a big pot of beef, beans and spices for hours may be one of the most traditional ways to make chili. But it's not the only way, and it's not what I've been doing lately as my beef consumption continues to plummet. To my mind, once you have all those beans and onions and chiles and spices simmering away, adding beef to the pot is simply a waste. I eat beef so infrequently that, when I do, I want it to be the star of the plate — a rare

steak, a juicy burger, tender morsels of short rib or brisket dripping their heady gravy onto my generously buttered noodles. Or maybe I'll even go for a pot of beef chili without any beans at all (which, according to multitudes in Texas and beyond, is the only acceptable way to prepare it). Instead, I usually stick to bean chilies that are either vegetarian or spiked with a little ground turkey or chicken for flavor and heft. I also forgo the hours of simmering because, when it's cooked in a wide skillet instead of a deep pot, the whole thing comes together

weeknight fast, in about an hour. For this exceptionally cozy version, I crown the chili with cornmeal biscuits before baking. It's a bit like a tamale pie, an American classic that has nothing to do with Latin American tamales and everything to do with streamlined one-pot meals. When nestled on top of the chili, the biscuits stay softer underneath than they would if baked separately on a pan — a welcome contrast to their crisp and golden tops. For this recipe, I did include some ground turkey (or chicken), but feel free to

leave it out and add an extra can or two of beans instead. Another possible poultry option is ground duck, which adds loads of depth but can be hard to find. And fake meat works perfectly here as well. If you're a planner, you can make the cornmeal batter and the chili several hours ahead — or even the night before — then bake them together right before serving, so the biscuits are at their most tender. A dollop of sour cream or yogurt at the end isn't strictly necessary, but the cool milkiness is lovely with the spicy, meaty — or meatless — chili.

One-pot turkey chili and biscuits

- Makes:** 4 to 6 servings  
**Total time:** 1 hour  
**For the biscuits:**  
1 cup all-purpose flour  
¾ cup fine cornmeal  
2 teaspoons baking powder  
1 teaspoon sugar  
½ teaspoon fine sea or table salt  
¼ teaspoon baking soda  
8 tablespoons cold, unsalted butter, cut into ½-inch cubes  
¾ cup buttermilk or plain whole-milk yogurt  
1 scallion, thinly sliced, plus more for serving  
Milk or more buttermilk or yogurt, for finishing  
2 tablespoons grated Parmesan, for finishing  
**For the chili:**  
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil  
1 pound ground turkey  
1 large yellow onion, diced  
1 jalapeño, seeded (if desired) and diced  
3 garlic cloves, finely grated, passed through a press or minced  
1 tablespoon chili powder  
1 ½ teaspoons fine sea or table salt, plus more to taste  
1 teaspoon dried oregano  
¾ teaspoon ground cumin  
½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper  
1 (14 ½-ounce) can whole plum tomatoes (1 ¾ cups)  
2 (15-ounce) cans pinto or black beans, drained and rinsed  
½ cup chopped fresh cilantro leaves and tender stems  
Sour cream (or Greek yogurt) and pickled jalapeños, for serving (optional)  
**1. Prepare the biscuits:** In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, cornmeal, baking powder, sugar, salt and baking soda.  
**2. Using a pastry cutter** or your hands, cut or rub in the butter until mixture resembles rolled oats. Fold in the buttermilk and scallion. Gently stir mixture until it comes together in a moist, sticky mass. Cover bowl and refrigerate until ready to use.  
**3. Heat** oven to 425 degrees.  
**4. Start the chili:** In a large ovenproof skillet, heat oil over high heat until it thins. Stir in turkey and cook, breaking up meat with a wooden spoon, until it's no longer pink with some browned bits, about 7 minutes.  
**5. Reduce** heat to medium-high, add onion and jalapeño, and cook until translucent and tender, about 5 minutes. Stir in garlic, chili powder, 1 teaspoon salt, oregano, cumin and pepper, and cook until fragrant, about 1 minute longer.  
**6. Using** kitchen shears or your hands, break up tomatoes and add them, along with juices, to pan. Add beans and remaining ½ teaspoon salt, and scrape up any brown bits on bottom of pan. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer until slightly thickened, 3 to 5 minutes. If mixture seems very dry, add a few tablespoons water. It should be juicy-looking but not wet. Remove from heat and stir in cilantro. Taste and add more salt, if needed.  
**7. Divide** biscuit dough into 6 equal balls. Use your palm to flatten each ball into ¾-inch-thick disk. Arrange on top of chili. Brush biscuits lightly with milk, and sprinkle grated Parmesan on top. Transfer skillet to oven and cook until biscuits are golden at the edges, 25 to 30 minutes. Let cool for 10 minutes before serving. Serve with sour cream and pickled jalapeños, if you like, and more scallions.





Cardamom buns from Jenny Lind Bakery are tender but chewy, slightly sweet and ringing with a bracing burst of cardamom. RICK NELSON/MINNEAPOLIS STAR TRIBUNE

# A Swedish treat worth mastering

Cardamom buns are a core component of fika, the practice of a coffee-and-snack break

By Rick Nelson  
Star Tribune

MINNEAPOLIS — Ruth Raich has happy memories of childhood visits to Sweden, helping her grandmother make kardemummabullar.

What the English-speaking world calls the cardamom bun is a core component of fika, the civilized Swedish practice of a coffee-and-snack break.

What a treat! Cardamom buns are tender but chewy, slightly sweet and ringing with a bracing burst of cardamom. Just looking at these sculpted beauties, their tops glistening with sugar, instantly invokes temptation.

Starting in the late 1980s, Raich’s take on the classic kardemummabullar became a trademark item at each incarnation of her popular baking-centric businesses.

Although her Jenny Lind Cafe in Stockholm, Wisconsin, and Smokey Row Cafe in Red Wing, Minnesota, are in Raich’s past, she continues — thankfully — to produce cardamom rolls, baking batches of them several days a week in the cozy Jenny Lind wholesale bakery that she built inside a converted chicken coop on the farm near Maiden Rock, Wisconsin, that she shares with her wife.

My husband first encountered Raich’s cardamom rolls in the 1990s and has craved them ever since. (Call them “rolls” or “buns,” the meaning is the same; Raich invokes the former.) He introduced me to their splendors more than 20 years ago, and I’ve been similarly hooked.

Several months ago, I stumbled upon a copy of “Favorite Recipes of the Jenny Lind Bakery & Cafe,” Raich’s 2014 cookbook, and was delighted to discover that it included a recipe for her signature rolls.

My first attempts — tough, bland, ungainly, sometimes all three — were pallid imitations of Raich’s handiwork. What was I doing wrong? My late grandmother Hedvig, the daughter of Swedish farmers, could perform magic with flour and yeast, so you’d think that baking



Twisting the spiraled dough into shapely buns is an art. NATASHA BREEN/REDA&CO/UNIVERSAL IMAGES GROUP

DNA might intervene. Nope.

I called Raich and invited myself to her workplace for a tutorial. Observing this baker in her native habitat was a study in economy of movement. Years of routine means that Raich can seamlessly and simultaneously turn out scones, cookies and three variations of fist-sized sweet rolls: almond, cinnamon and cardamom, all while coaching an amateur on the ins and outs of handling an egg-rich yeasted dough.

After that invaluable lesson, my next few batches — while not identical to Raich’s expert output — were reasonable facsimiles. My kneading abilities are hardly intuitive, and I don’t have her practiced panache when it comes to twisting the dough into beautifully layered buns. But I’m determined to get there.

Thanks to Raich’s skill and generosity, my 2022 New Year’s resolution is to bake more cardamom buns. You should, too. The recipe may appear daunting, but once you get the hang of it, it’s easy — honest — and the effort is so worth it.

## Tips from the expert

**Troubleshooting:** “When it comes to making cardamom rolls, people usually encounter three problems,” Raich said. “They didn’t knead long enough, so there’s not enough protein structure that allows the dough to rise. Or they added too much flour. Or

the liquid was too hot and it killed the yeast.”

**Kneading, part 1:** “When people are kneading by hand, they get tired,” she said. “It’s always going to be more than you think, especially for beginner bakers, and so I always tell people that when you want to stop, keep going for 2 to 5 more minutes.”

**Kneading, part 2:** Still, Raich advises using a stand mixer fitted with a bread hook. “It keeps you from adding too much flour,” she said.

At her bakery, in the mammoth 30-quart Hobart mixer she calls “Francine,” Raich kneads the dough on medium speed for 3 minutes. “But home mixers have less powerful motors, so they should knead longer,” she said, which explains the recipe’s extended knead time. When it’s ready, the dough should feel smooth but stick slightly to the bottom of the bowl.

**Warming up:** For the first proof, consider placing the covered bowl in an unheated gas-powered oven. “The oven’s pilot light will keep it warm enough,” she said. For the second proof, place the baking sheets near a radiator, or on tables or counters that are bathed in sunlight.

**Air dry:** If the dough feels too wet and sticky after the first proof, Raich scrapes it onto a lightly floured work surface and lets the dough sit in the open air,

untouched, for about 15 to 20 minutes, then rolls it out.

**Working by hand:** When spreading butter across the rolled dough, Raich uses her hands rather than a spatula. Also, avoid melted butter. “It’s easier to keep it on the dough if the butter is soft — at room temperature — rather than if it’s melted,” she said.

**Flavor booster:** Raich grinds whole cardamom seeds, and there’s one big reason: The flavor is more robust than using packaged ground cardamom. And there’s one caveat: “Cardamom seeds are hard on grinders,” she said. A mortar and pestle also work.

**Touch test:** For those without an instant-read thermometer, rely upon your senses. “The liquid should be ‘baby bottle’ warm,” she said. “It’s body temperature.”

**Egg wash:** Don’t skip this step. “It keeps the roll from getting dry, and it gives them color,” she said. Use milk, and the results will be a soft, brown roll. Use water, and the top will be crispy but not brown. Use an egg wash, and the roll will be brown and delicately crispy on top.

**Twist tutorial:** Raich has a helpful YouTube video where she demonstrates her technique for twisting spiraled dough into shapely buns, and it’s worth watching. Find it at [youtube.com/watch?v=RCNht2N\\_47Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RCNht2N_47Q).

## Cardamom buns

- Makes:** 1 dozen buns  
**Note:** This dough must be prepared in advance.  
**For the dough:**  
6 tablespoons (¾ stick) unsalted butter, melted and cooled, plus more (at room temperature) for greasing bowl  
1 ¼ cup plus 2 tablespoons whole milk  
3 eggs, lightly beaten  
¼ cup plus 2 tablespoons sugar  
1 tablespoon instant dry yeast  
1 ½ teaspoons salt  
5 cups flour, plus more for rolling dough  
**For the filling:**  
¾ cup sugar  
2 tablespoons ground cinnamon  
2 tablespoons ground cardamom  
4 tablespoons (½ stick) unsalted butter, at room temperature  
**For the topping:**  
1 egg  
1 tablespoon water  
Sanding sugar or pearl sugar  
**1. To prepare dough:** Grease a large bowl with room-temperature butter and set aside.  
**2. In a microwave-safe bowl,** combine the cooled melted butter, milk and 3 beaten eggs, and heat in microwave oven, in 30-second increments, until mixture reaches 100 degrees on an instant-read thermometer (do not exceed 100 degrees).  
**3. Pour** mixture into the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a bread hook. Add ¼ cup plus 2 tablespoons sugar, yeast and salt, and mix on medium speed until combined. Reduce speed to low, add 4 ¾ cups flour and mix until flour is incorporated into the liquid and dough comes together, about 2 minutes. Increase speed to medium and mix until dough is glossy and elastic and forms a ball but still sticks slightly to the bottom of the bowl (add flour as necessary, 1 tablespoon at a time, up to the remaining ¼ cup; be careful not to add too much flour), about 5 to 6 minutes.  
**4. (Alternately, in a large bowl,** combine butter-milk mixture with ¼ cup plus 2 tablespoons sugar, yeast and salt, and stir to combine. Add 4 ¾ cups flour and stir, vigorously, until thoroughly combined. Lightly flour a clean working surface. Scrape dough onto prepared work surface. Using lightly floured hands, knead into an elastic, smooth dough — not too dry, with good elasticity — about 10 to 12 minutes. If dough is too sticky, lightly add flour as needed, 1 tablespoon at a time, up to the remaining ¼ cup; be careful not to add too much flour.)  
**5. Scrape** dough into prepared bowl, cover with a cotton dishcloth, place in a warm area (about 80 degrees) and let rise until almost doubled, about 60 minutes.  
**6. To prepare filling:** In a small bowl, combine ¾ cup sugar, cinnamon and cardamom. Line baking sheets with parchment paper.  
**7. Lightly flour** a clean working surface. Using a spatula or scraper, transfer dough to prepared work surface. Using a lightly floured rolling pin, roll the dough — in short, quick, even strokes — into a 20- by 24-inch rectangle that is roughly ¼- to ½-inch thick. Be sure to keep lightly adding flour as needed to the work surface, to prevent the dough from sticking.  
**8. Spread** the surface of the dough with 4 tablespoons room-temperature butter, working right up to the edges. Sprinkle cardamom-cinnamon mixture evenly over the butter, sprinkling right up to the edges. Starting on the 20-inch side of the rectangle, roll dough snugly into a log, leaving the log seam-side-down on the work surface.  
**9. Using a sharp knife,** trim uneven ends, then cut the log crosswise into 12 buns measuring about 1 ½ inches wide. Pick up each bun, with one thumb gripping the top of the dough and the other one gripping the bottom. Gently make two whole twists, with your hands going in opposite directions, pulling lightly on the dough as you twist. After turning the bun in your hands, tuck one end of the bun under the other end, forming a ball. Place twisted buns 2 inches apart on prepared baking sheets.  
**10. Loosely cover** the buns with a cotton dishcloth, place in a warm area (about 80 degrees) and let the buns rise until they’re puffy, about 30 to 45 minutes.  
**11. To prepare topping:** When ready to bake, preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a small bowl, whisk 1 egg with 1 tablespoon water. Brush the buns with egg wash, then sprinkle with sanding sugar or pearl sugar. Bake until golden (but not too dark, or buns will be dry), about 18 to 20 minutes, rotating baking sheets halfway through baking time. Remove from oven. Serve warm or at room temperature.  
**12. To prepare ahead:** Once the dough has been twisted into buns, the unbaked buns can be covered in plastic wrap and refrigerated, overnight. When ready to bake, place buns 2 inches apart on parchment paper-lined baking sheets. Loosely cover with a cotton dish cloth, place in a warm area (about 80 degrees) and let buns rise until puffy, about 60 to 75 minutes. Brush with egg wash, garnish with decorative sugar and bake as instructed.  
— Adapted from “Favorite Recipes of the Jenny Lind Bakery & Cafe” by Ruth Raich



# For Greek reds, the embrace will be slow

Education will have to precede broad acceptance

By Eric Asimov  
The New York Times

Few wines seem quite so unfamiliar and mystifying to Americans as those from Greece. It's no mystery why they are unfamiliar. Greek wines are fairly new to the global marketplace, particularly the red wines. Given that Greece is one of the most ancient wine-producing cultures, that seems like a bit of a paradox. But as historic wine-producing countries around the world have learned, local traditions of making and enjoying wines are not enough to succeed in the worldwide wine trade. Producers must develop systems of production and distribution that guarantee virtually impeccable quality halfway around the world before they can even hope to find a foreign clientele curious enough to buy their wines. Once they do, they can begin the perhaps equally arduous process of education and marketing in hopes of creating demand. That's where Greece is right now. Over the last third of the 20th century, a Greek wine industry arose that was focused on high quality and the ability to sell bottles internationally. Just as important, many of the best producers are concentrating on indigenous grapes rather than trying their hand at overly familiar international varieties and styles, though some of that is happening as well. But many consumers seem as if they are not ready to make the leap to these Greek wines, particularly the reds, which for the most part are newer to the American marketplace than the whites. Why is that? Readers who have been drinking Greek reds over the last month had a few theories. "Even though Greek wine quality has come a long way in the past 20 years or so, it's still an educational uphill battle," said TLeaf of Denver. "How to get the American palate to taste past the notions of ouzo and retsina?" Maybe I'm naïve, but I don't believe that most American wine consumers are stymied by memories of ouzo, an anise spirit that

was often handed out liberally in shtick-heavy Greek restaurants after meals. Nor do I think they confuse other Greek wines with retsina, a traditional wine flavored with the sap of the Aleppo pine, which tourist manuals over generations have warned people to avoid. (Good retsina, on the other hand, is a beautiful thing.) No, I don't think it's fear so much as unfamiliarity, though admittedly, what separates these feelings can sometimes be a fine distinction. We are keenly aware of the subtle messages conveyed by words and language, and the discomfort that can come when facing something new. Wine is difficult and intimidating enough in any language. Throw in a different alphabet, and it's easy to get overwhelmed. This ought to be expected, and it speaks to the important role restaurants and sommeliers play in familiarizing the public with new and different wines. In my introductory article on Greek reds, I alluded to the scant few opportunities to learn about Greek wines, partly because few restaurants are around to play a significant educational role, just as the rarity of German and Austrian restaurants does not help Americans feel more comfortable with Germanic wines. One wine, grüner veltliner, is an exception to this notion. At the turn of the 21st century, grüner was virtually unknown to Americans, yet it swiftly became a popular restaurant wine. How did that happen? Sommeliers embraced it, transcending national boundaries. American restaurants began serving it by the glass, with bartenders and waiters ready to offer tableside reassurance to the hesitant. I don't expect that to happen with Greek reds. It will be a long haul with many baby steps, including the first one, simply trying the wines because they have so much to offer. As usual, I suggested three bottles to drink over the course of the last month. They were: Domaine Glinavos Ioannina Vlahiko 2018, Argatia Macedonia Haroula 2018 and



PEPE SERRA/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Kir-Yianni Naoussa Xinomavro Ramnista 2017. If the language seems overly challenging, I would urge patience. The beauty of good wine is its ability to transport you to different places and cultures, sometimes commonplace, sometimes entirely new. Cozy and familiar is wonderful, but so is the adventure of the unknown.

If people know much about Greek geography at all, it's the area around Athens and the islands, where white wines predominate. The leading areas for reds are in the less-familiar northern parts of the country like Macedonia, where the Argatia comes from, and Naoussa, a prime red-wine region within Macedonia, where Kir-Yianni is

situated. Xinomavro is the most important red grape in the region. Ioannina in northwest Greece, within the larger Epirus region, is the home of Domaine Glinavos. The wine we tasted was made of vlahiko with a smaller amount of bekari, both local grapes. The Glinavos was bright and energetic, with dark, savory flavors combined with an apple freshness. It was juicy and spicy, not particularly tannic but with a good structure that came from lively acidity. The Argatia Haroula, made largely of xinomavro with small amounts of two lesser-known indigenous grapes blended in, negoska and mavrodafni, was likewise bright and lively, with the flavors of red and dark fruits as well as licorice, a signature flavor of xinomavro. The Kir-Yianni Ramnista was made entirely of xinomavro. It seemed a little more polished than the other two bottles, having been aged in oak barrels, and was more powerful at 14.5% alcohol as against 12% for the Glinavos and 13.5% for the Argatia. It was smooth with fine tannins and deep flavors of licorice, dark fruits and menthol. Many people, like Steven Kolpan of Woodstock, New York, a longtime wine educator, liken xinomavro to nebbiolo. This bottle made the resemblance clear. Readers largely enjoyed these wines, though VSB of San Francisco did not like the Glinavos, which he found thin and sour. But he did find a Troupis agiorgitiko that he liked. Nonetheless, as VSB predicted, other readers raved about the Glinavos. "I really loved this wine," said Martina Mirandola Mullen of New York. "It was light and complex with fine tannins that would make it pair well with fish or meat." Rachel Semmons of Tampa, Florida, enjoyed both the Glinavos and the Argatia Haroula. She said she had tried several Greek wines that were disappointing, which had colored her view and would continue to influence her. "These bottles were encouraging, but lack of availability and a lingering concern about reliability make it more likely that we won't be drinking a ton of Greek wines in the future," she said.



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I asked what kind of family Amina wanted. She said, ‘A family like yours.’ That’s when I knew I had to adopt her.

Denise, adopted 17-year-old Amina



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A coating of cornstarch and oil — plus, long-simmering in a hot oven — makes the deep fryer for this tofu sheet pan dinner. KATE SEARS/ THE NEW YORK TIMES

# Crisp-edged tofu straight from your oven

By **Melissa Clark**  
The New York Times

I used to be convinced that the only way to get truly crisp tofu was to fry it. I'd roasted it and broiled it, but I was never able to achieve those burnished, crisp corners that a pan full of screaming-hot oil reliably delivered.

Then I tried a technique from Jenny Rosenstrach's excellent cookbook, "The Weekday Vegetarians," and everything changed.

The method involved coating tofu cubes with a mix of oil and cornstarch before roasting them at high heat. It was the cornstarch that made the difference. When roasted without it, the tofu turns brown

but stays soft. It's the starch that adds the crunch, without splattering oil all over my stove and floor the way frying would. I was hooked.

The beauty of this recipe, other than the crunch, is how adaptable it is. You can spike the cornstarch mix with all kinds of seasonings. Rosenstrach uses soy sauce. For this recipe, I added a mix of garlic powder and oregano. I've also tried preparing it with other spices or citrus zest, a dash of fish sauce or another of chile oil, and they worked beautifully, too.

Similarly, you can use either extra-firm or firm tofu. Extra-firm gets crunchier on the outside but stays more rigid inside. Firm has a more pillowlike and squishy core. Just avoid soft tofu, which holds too

much moisture to really brown.

Once you've got the crisp and salty tofu cubes, there's loads of ways to use them — as croutons on a salad, stuffed into sandwiches, mixed into stir-fried vegetables, eaten by the handful when no one is looking (try to save some for dinner).

In this version, I added tomatoes and onions to the baking pan. Then, to lend a fruity, bright note, I drizzled the vegetables with balsamic vinegar, which condensed into a sweet-tart glaze.

You can swap other vegetables for the tomatoes and onions, just as long as they'll cook in the same amount of time as the tofu — 25-35 minutes. Try chunks of mushroom, cauliflower florets, red pepper strips or thin slices of winter squash.

**Crispy tofu with balsamic tomatoes**

**Makes:** 2 to 3 servings  
**Total time:** 40 minutes, plus at least 15 minutes of draining  
1 (14- to 16-ounce) package extra-firm or firm tofu, cut crosswise into 1-inch-thick slices  
1½ teaspoons kosher salt (Diamond Crystal), plus more as needed  
½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, plus more as needed  
3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for finishing  
1 tablespoon cornstarch  
1 teaspoon garlic powder (optional)  
1 teaspoon dried oregano  
1 pint cherry tomatoes, halved if large, kept whole if small  
1 large red onion, cut into ¼-inch wedges (about 2 cups)  
3 garlic cloves, thinly sliced  
1½ teaspoons balsamic vinegar, plus more for finishing  
½ cup fresh cilantro or parsley leaves and tender stems, roughly chopped

**1. Heat** oven to 400 degrees and line a sheet pan with parchment paper.

**2. Arrange** tofu slices on a clean kitchen towel or on paper towels. Cover with another kitchen towel (or paper towels) and place a flat cutting board or baking pan on top. If your cutting board or pan is lightweight, stack a few cans or a skillet on top to weigh it down. Let tofu drain for at least 15 minutes, and up to 45 minutes.

**3. Transfer** tofu to a cutting board and cut slabs into 1-inch cubes. Pat them dry with paper towels and season both sides of the tofu with ¾ teaspoon of the salt and ¼ teaspoon black pepper.

**4. In a medium mixing bowl**, whisk together 1 tablespoon oil, cornstarch, garlic powder (if using) and ½ teaspoon of the oregano. Add tofu to cornstarch mixture and gently toss until tofu is evenly coated. Dump tofu onto one side of the prepared sheet pan.

**5. In a large bowl**, toss together tomatoes, onion, garlic, balsamic vinegar, remaining ½ teaspoon oregano, ¾ teaspoon salt and ¼ teaspoon pepper. Drizzle in the remaining 2 tablespoons of the oil, tossing to combine.

**6. Arrange** vegetables on other side of the prepared sheet pan. Bake until tofu is crisp and golden brown, and tomatoes are condensed, 25-35 minutes. Halfway through baking, flip tofu and toss vegetables while keeping the tofu and veggies separate.

**7. To serve**, sprinkle cilantro on top and drizzle with balsamic and oil, if you'd like.

This recipe serves two hungry people or three moderately hungry ones. If you double it, use two baking sheets and add a few extra minutes to the roasting time.

All in all, this does take longer than frying, but any extra cooking time is made up for by less cleanup time — a trade-off I'm always willing to make for a dinner this good.



Everyone will love the convenience of this little snack. KEVIN WHITE/AMERICA'S TEST KITCHEN

# These sweet mini muffins will be the apple of your eye

America's Test Kitchen

A good snack to keep on hand, these mini muffins can be stored at room temperature for a few days or frozen so you can have them whenever you need them.

If muffins are frozen, thaw at room temperature, and then refresh muffins by placing them on a rimmed baking sheet and warming them in a 300-degree oven for about 10 minutes.

## Applesauce mini muffins

**Makes:** 24 mini muffins  
Vegetable oil spray  
1½ cups (7½ ounces) all-purpose flour  
1 teaspoon baking soda  
½ teaspoon salt  
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon  
1 cup unsweetened applesauce  
8 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted and cooled  
½ cup (3½ ounces) sugar, plus extra for sprinkling  
¼ cup apple cider or apple juice  
1 large egg

**1. Adjust** oven rack to the middle position and heat oven to 375 degrees. Spray a mini muffin tin well with vegetable oil spray.

**2. In a large bowl**, whisk together flour, baking soda, salt and cinnamon.

**Fun fact: The oldest apple**

There are many kinds of apples, from McIntosh to Pink Lady, Fuji to Golden Delicious.

Which ones are your favorites? "Heirloom" apples are apples that have been grown for more than 50 years.

The oldest kind of apple, the Decio, is from Italy. It dates back more than 1,500 years! A Roman general named Ezio supposedly took it with him as he chased Attila the Hun.

**3. In a medium bowl**, whisk applesauce, melted butter, sugar, cider and egg until well combined.

**4. Add** applesauce mixture to flour mixture, and use a rubber spatula to gently stir until just combined and no dry flour is visible. Do not overmix.

**5. Scoop** the batter into each muffin tin cup with 2 spoons (fill muffin cups to the top). Sprinkle the top of the muffins with a little extra sugar.

**6. Bake** until muffins are deep golden brown and a toothpick inserted in the center of one muffin comes out clean, 12 to 14 minutes.

**7. Place** muffin tin on a cooling rack and let muffins cool for 15 minutes. Gently wiggle muffins to loosen from muffin tin and transfer directly to the cooling rack. Let muffins cool for at least 5 minutes.

## SERIOUSLY SIMPLE

# French toast with pecan syrup will please everyone

By **Diane Rossen Worthington**  
Tribune Content Agency

Did you ever wonder why this particular breakfast dish is called French toast? Necessity is clearly the mother of invention for this dish.

In olden times, bread could be difficult to come by, and any leftover was too precious to just throw away. Enter bread soaked in whisked eggs and then fried until brown on both sides and slightly custardy in the center. In France it was named "pain perdu" meaning lost bread. In the U.S., we call it French toast. There are many versions of this dish. You can oven bake it or cut the bread in thick strips, like they do in Spain, and offer it as a dessert.

The recipe below is a classic with the syrup enhanced with toasted pecans. Extra thick slices of egg bread create a custardy interior and golden-brown outer layer. Egg bread or challah give the dish a distinctive taste and texture. Vanilla extract and orange round out all the flavors. This family favorite



This classic recipe is amped up with a pecan maple syrup. DREAMSTIME/TNS

is finished with a drizzle of toasted pecan maple syrup and a sprinkling of bright berries.

Other breads that work well for French toast include wheat bread, sourdough and French

bread. I like to serve crispy strips of bacon alongside to complement the sweet flavors of the syrup. This is a dish that pleases most everyone, from young kids to seniors. And what could be a better weekend treat?

have to do this in batches.) Pour the egg mixture over the bread and turn them to be sure they are coated evenly. Let the bread sit for 5 minutes.

**3. In a large frying pan**, melt half of the butter over medium heat and when the foam has just subsided, add the bread slices in one layer (cook in batches if necessary). Cook the bread until its golden brown, about 2 to 4 minutes, then turn and cook the other side until golden, about 2 more minutes. Repeat with the remaining butter and bread.

**4. Serve** on plates, drizzled with pecan maple syrup and fresh berries.

**French toast with berries and toasted pecan maple syrup**

**Makes:** 4 servings  
**For the syrup:**  
¼ cup coarsely chopped pecans  
1 cup maple syrup  
**For the French toast:**  
4 large eggs  
1½ cups milk  
1 teaspoon vanilla  
1 teaspoon orange zest  
1 tablespoon sugar  
8 thick (¾-inch) slices egg bread (challah works well)  
3 tablespoons unsalted butter  
Fresh strawberries and blueberries, for garnish

**To make the syrup:**

**1. In a medium skillet** on medium heat toast the pecans for about 3 minutes or so, or until the pecans are lightly browned and have a toasted aroma.

**2. Add** the syrup and warm for about 2 more minutes.

**3. Transfer** into a heat-proof pitcher and reserve. You can reheat in a microwave for a minute just before serving if you like your syrup hot.

**For the French toast:**

**1. In a medium bowl**, whisk together the eggs, milk, vanilla, orange zest and sugar until well blended.

**2. Arrange** the bread slices in one layer in a large rectangular baking dish with 2-inch sides. (You may